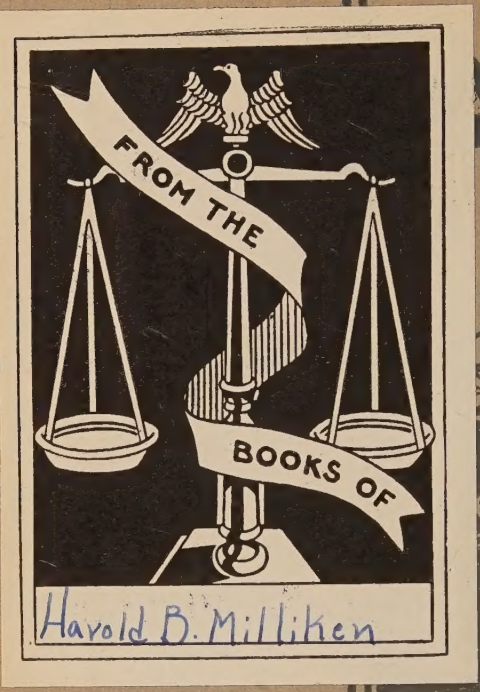
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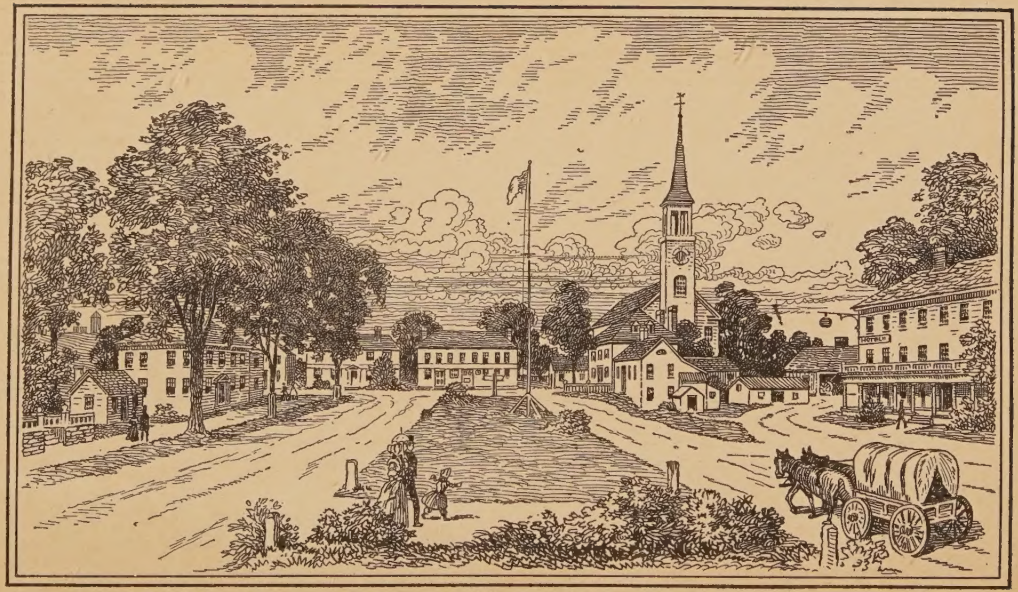
Essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson



CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS IN 1837.
From an old wood engraving by John Barber.

ESSAYS

Ralph
Waldo
Emerson

Edited by Eugene D. Holmes
Revised by H. Y. Moffett
Illustrated by Homer W. Colby

The Macmillan Company

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INTRODUCTION

Biographical Sketch of Emerson

In the city of Boston, on the 25th of May, 1803, Ralph Waldo Emerson was born. He had a notable ancestry, to which, by the law of heredity, biographers are wont to credit his unusual traits, talents, and temperament. The first of the Emerson lineage in America was Thomas, who came from northern England, probably from Durham, and settled in Ipswich, Massachusetts, in 1635. He was a baker, and, as one biographer says, "furnished the staff of life to the people of that wonderfully interesting old town and its neighborhood." His son, the Rev. Joseph Emerson, moved to Concord, Massachusetts, where he died in the year 1680. Joseph's son Edward, a merchant, was next in direct descent and the only interruption in the line of ministers; but the interruption was slight, for his gravestone bears the inscription, "Sometime Deacon of the first church in Newbury." His son, Rev. Joseph Emerson, was minister at Malden. The Malden minister's son, Rev. William Emerson, was minister of the Concord church; but in 1776 he became chaplain of the army at Ticonderoga, was taken ill with fever and died on his way home. He left a son, William, who, in 1799, became minister of the First Church in Boston. This Rev. William Emerson, who in 1796 had married Ruth Haskins, a woman of fine character and marked intellectual ability, was the father of our author, Ralph Waldo Emerson.

From this brief review of the genealogy of his family it is evident that Waldo Emerson might possess whatever power of mind or elevation of spirit may come to one through at least five generations of distinctively intellectual and high-souled ancestors.

In the year 1811 the Rev. William Emerson died, leaving to the mother the responsibility of rearing six children, five of whom grew to manhood. The means left her was far too small, so that rigid economy and great austerity of living were necessary. The church continued the pastor's salary to the widow for six months, allowed them the use of the parsonage for three years, and voted the family a stipend of five hundreds dollars yearly for three years; but for a family of seven during the first three years and of six after the death of the only daughter in 1814, the income was inadequate to provide the simplest degree of comfort. Boarders were taken in, and Mrs. Emerson heroically bore the burden. From Mary Emerson we learn that boarders were then hard to please (has the world grown better since then?), and that Mrs. Emerson nobly faced duty; for Mary praises her for great patience under "the trials of boarders." At times the family was without sufficient food, and one overcoat was made to serve both Edward and Waldo. It is interesting to note that, with these early days in mind, he wrote in after years, "The angels that dwell with them, and are wreathing laurels of life for their youthful brows, are Toil and Want and Truth and Mutual Faith."

Six years of school life preceded his entrance to college. At the age of eight years, he entered the public school of Boston, and two years later he became a member of the Boston Latin School, where

he remained four years. During a part of this time he spent two hours of each day at a private school. From a letter written near the close of his course at the Latin School we learn his daily routine of duties. He tells us that he arose at five minutes before six in the morning, helped his brother make the fire, set the table for prayers, and called his mother at a quarter past six. After a spelling contest, the family ate breakfast. From a quarter after seven till eight he could play or read, but confesses his inclination to do the former. From eight to eleven o'clock he was at the Latin School, and from eleven to one o'clock he was learning to write and cipher at the private school. After one hour at home he returned to the Latin School. School hours over, he did errands, drove up the cow, carried in wood, spent some time at play, and joined the family at supper. The evening was spent in reciting hymns and in reading. His usual hour for retiring was shortly after eight. In this simple manner, with no advantage from environment, with no evidence of unusual powers of mind, and with some indication of slender physical powers, the six years of his boyhood passed and he was ready for entrance to college.

In the year 1817, at the age of fourteen years, Waldo, as he was commonly called, entered Harvard College. He paid for his lodgings by serving as messenger to the president, and for three-fourths of his board by waiting on tables at the Commons. For necessary expenses, he was dependent on a fund established for indigent students In 1821, shortly after his eighteenth birthday, he was graduated at Harvard, leaving behind him not more than an average record for scholarship. He was widely read in the English dramatists, a fact

which may readily be discovered in the present Essays; he knew well the writings of Addison and his literary associates; read Latin with ease and Greek not so well, had no knowledge of the sciences, had given little attention to the modern foreign languages, and heartily disliked mathematics. His chief distinction seems to have been won by upright conduct, poise of mind, and excellence of character.

After leaving college the young graduate turned to teaching. His brother William had established in Boston a school for girls, in which Ralph Waldo acted as assistant for a time, and afterwards as manager during William's absence in Europe. For over four years, in Boston and elsewhere, he spent his days in teaching; but he tells us that his nights were spent in writing. The success of his brother's school relieved the pecuniary needs of the family, so that the mother was able to remove to a rural home called Canterbury Lane, in Roxbury. Meantime, Waldo had saved nearly three thousand dollars from his salary, and now, in February, 1825, entered upon a regular course in divinity at Cambridge. At the end of a month his eyes failed him, and his general health was impaired to such an extent that he went to the country and engaged in physical labor. Relief came slowly, and it was more than a year before he could return to his studies. During the year he taught for a brief time at Chelmsford, occasionally attended lectures in divinity, and in October, 1826, was "approbated to preach."

In November he was obliged to go to the Carolinas in quest of health. While in the South he preached in a number of the southern cities, and was able to return to Boston in June, 1827, and

to pursue his course in divinity during the following year. In December, 1828, he was betrothed to Miss Ellen Tucker of Concord, and about the same time was invited to become the colleague of the Rev. Henry Ware in the Second Congregational Church of Boston.

Mr. Emerson was married to Miss Tucker in the autumn of 1829, and continued to preach in the Second Church till September 9, 1832, when on account of difference of belief he preached his farewell sermon and resigned his pastorate. This was a difficult step, but he retained the respect and honor of the people with whom he differed, by the sweet temper and the kindly spirit in which he took his leave.

Early in the year 1831 his wife had died, and now the necessary severance of the pastoral relation left Mr. Emerson in impaired health and downcast spirits. In December, 1832, he sailed for Sicily, and in the course of his journeyings visited Italy, France, England, and Scotland, and met Landor, Lafayette, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Carlyle. From his meeting with the Scotch essayist and historian, Thomas Carlyle, began a correspondence which lasted for forty years, and which contains much matter of literary interest. The influence of Carlyle appears most markedly in *Representative Men,* which owes much to *Heroes and Hero-Worship.* Emerson returned to America in the autumn of 1833, and promptly began a course of lectures on Natural History at Masonic Temple in Boston.

Mr. Emerson was now thirty years of age. He had laid the foundation for his life's work in a sound, though not extensive, education. He had made himself proficient as a writer of the older,

more florid prose, which he now abandoned for the simpler English, not always clear, or even correct, in which we now have his works. He had also a good mastery of poetic expression; but neither his writings nor his preaching had given him more than an excellent local reputation. The greater work of his life was yet to be accomplished, and a world-wide reputation was yet to be realized.

From 1833 to the end of his active life, Mr. Emerson was a lecturer. For a few years he continued to accept occasionally invitations to supply pulpits; but the platform became his chosen place, and the lecture method his chosen way of uttering his thought to his fellow-men. His lectures steadily gained public recognition; regular appointments for annual courses were made; and whatsoever thought he had, save a few bits mostly in verse, was cast and uttered in lecture form. It has been pointed out by his biographers that his systematic lecture method had much to do with developing the "Lyceum System" which became so familiar to the American public. The essays which now mainly constitute his prose works are the thought of his lectures arranged, revised, or rewritten for publication.

In 1835 he married Miss Lydia Jackson of Plymouth and established their home at Concord. It is unnecessary to trace in detail Mr. Emerson's literary work; this the student will find accomplished in the excellent biographies mentioned at the close of this Introduction. A list of his principal works follows the Introduction, but the reader's attention is called to two or three titles of works which were important in establishing the author's reputation.

The first of these is *Nature,* a slender volume

published in 1836. Its reception was limited, and some were even inclined to ridicule it as vague and meaningless. It took twelve years to sell five hundred copies. Oliver Wendell Holmes calls it a "reflective prose poem." This it is, and the reviewers of the time were generally mystified by its imaginative thought, by certain of the author's characteristic obscurities and by the style of expression, to which they were unaccustomed. Among the few who saw its worth was Emerson's Scotch correspondent, Thomas Carlyle. In a letter he says, "Your little azure-colored *Nature* gave me true satisfaction. . . . You say it is the first chapter of something greater. I call it rather the Foundation and Ground-plan on which you may build. . . . I rejoice much in the glad serenity of soul with which you look out on this wondrous Dwelling-place of yours and mine, . . ."

Early in the same year, on the anniversary of the battle of Lexington, Mr. Emerson wrote the now celebrated "Concord Hymn." Few words of his have become so widely known as the following stanza of that hymn:

> By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
> Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
> Here once the embattled farmers stood,
> And fired the shot heard round the world.

Mention must also be made of the epoch-making address before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge on "Man Thinking; or, the American Scholar." This address, the last published in the present volume, has been called "our intellectual Declaration of Independence." Its importance in American letters has been great. It was received with enthusiasm, and Lowell pronounced the occa-

sion "an event without a former parallel in our literary annals." A review of the thought of the address should be read as given by Oliver Wendell Holmes in his *Life of Mr. Emerson.* If the reading follows a study of the address, the student will receive the highest benefit.

For want of sufficient space, we must pass rapidly over the remaining years of our author's active career. In October, 1847, he sailed for England on the invitation of Alexander Ireland, Thomas Carlyle, and others. The purpose of his going was a lecture tour, which continued till July 15, 1848. His growing reputation brought him calls to all parts of his own country. Like every man of strong individuality, he was met by his share of animosity, but it was noticeable that the opposition was always aimed at his utterances, and that all honored and loved the man. Differences of opinion grew fewer and less pronounced as he became better known and understood; the fraternizing influence of his thought appeared; the sublimity of his life and character became an inspiration and a model to all who knew him.

Mr. Emerson's active literary career came to an end in the year 1867. After that time he addressed audiences and published books, but the material had been written long before. As late as 1875 he attended the Saturday Club in Boston, but only as a listener; for memory was failing, the twilight of life was deepening, and the gentle spirit was softly withdrawing from the contentions of men. At length, on an April day, a severe cold brought on pneumonia, of which he died on the 27th of that month, 1882.

The burial took place in Concord on April 30. The great numbers of people who came to pay their

last tribute of respect, the solemn decorations which hung from the public buildings, from the houses of the rich and of the humble poor, all bore impressive testimony to the universal love and respect in which Mr. Emerson was regarded, whether as author, neighbor, or friend. A great rock, not shaped by the sculptor's chisel, but fashioned as nature made it, rugged and simple, appropriately marks his grave.

WHY STUDY EMERSON'S ESSAYS

IT IS unnecessary to submit proof of the assertion that we need more idealism in American scholarship. Our European neighbors notice the condition, and we do not seriously dissent from their opinion. Indeed, we affirm it ourselves from platform and press, and the speaker or writer who asserts it receives the universal assent. In this condition, educational and social, is found a sufficient answer to the question why these essays should be studied. Mr. Emerson was an idealist. Best of all, he was an idealist who knew how to live this human life so well that some one has said he coupled with his idealism the practical, uncommon sense of Benjamin Franklin. The homely truth of the remark will be discovered by those who read these essays for their practical wisdom concerning private and social life.

With his idealism, or, rather, springing from it, is a noble, optimistic Americanism—true Americanism founded on pure motives and springing forward with generous human impulses. The idea of which he never loses sight, and which he discusses as self-reliance in the individual man, is an

expression of the central principle of our American democracy; is, indeed, a short version of the Declaration of Independence. His high idealism did not interfere with his interest and participation in local affairs, and the town meeting commanded his presence and his counsel. Few writers have so fully breathed the spirit of their active lives into their writings as Emerson has done, and his influence upon the reader is most salutary. A friend whose large experience as a teacher gives weight to his opinion recently wrote to the editor, "I know of no author better fitted to nerve the young mind to truth and nobility than Emerson."

Finally, if one would know American literature, he cannot omit the writings of Emerson. His first book marked a new departure in American letters; his voice uttered a new note which, like the shot fired at Concord bridge, has been "heard round the world." His manner of expression and his place in our literature are unique. Probably no writer has surpassed him in power to express thought in few words. While his paragraphs and essays are not to be studied as models of structure, his sentences are marvellously condensed, dignified, strong, and eloquent. In the well-known phrase of Ben Jonson, "his words are rammed with thought." He would often press the thought of a lecture into the compass of a sentence. From the platform this power, coupled with his sweetness and charm of manner, attracted and inspired many who could not comprehend all that he said.[1] A woman once owned that she could not understand him, but loved to hear him lecture, "because he looked so good." This goodness of spirit is as evident to the

[1] See "Emerson the Lecturer," by James Russell Lowell.

reader as it was to the listener. The great and good man is expressed in all that he wrote, and in this he is a distinct personality among American writers. It is not to be supposed that classes will study Emerson for his system of philosophy, for he had no system and sought not to construct a system; but his rational idealism, now so evidently needed in our educational system, his wholesome optimism and sympathy in local and national affairs, his high place and important influence in American literature, and his power to inspire others with his own nobility of thought and character, these will richly repay the student who studies with reflection and care the choice essays of Emerson.

THE PRESENT EDITION

THE essays here presented are selected for study in secondary schools. The utmost care has been taken, therefore, to choose only those which have stood the classroom test and have been approved by competent teachers. In the main, the following qualities have been the ground of selection: interest, ease of comprehension, practical ethical teaching, range of subject-matter, literary excellence.

The editor believes that progressive teachers are coming to agree that there is a sphere within which the editor of school classics may be helpful; but that his work should not supplant the unabridged dictionary, or usurp the office of the teacher. To define even unusual words with necessarily too brief and incomplete definitions narrows the students' study of language; and to make the notes a key to unlock every door to the author's thought robs the reader of his rarest privilege and the sure means of growth. Therefore, the annotations have

been directed, chiefly, to the explanation of biographical and historical references. An author may so use a name that the reader must know a whole biography to get the gist of the passage. A reference to history may imply familiarity with a chapter or a volume. Clearly, students of these essays have not the time, if they have the books, for unlimited reading, and so much diversion would defeat the central purpose. An effort has been made to supply all beneficial notes, and to avoid those of a detrimental nature. A list of questions follows the notes to each essay. They are such as students are likely to ask, and many of them have been raised by students in the classroom. These are not all that may be asked; they may not be the best; but these will tend to call attention to practical and ethical questions, and will suggest a useful line of thought. The method will help to solve the problem of calling out oral expression from members of the class.

EDITIONS OF EMERSON'S WORKS

The Centenary Edition, edited with biographical introduction and notes by E. W. Emerson, 12 vols., Boston, 1903.

Emerson's Journals, edited by E. W. Emerson and W. E. Forbes, 10 vols., Boston, 1904-14.

The Heart of Emerson's Journals, by Bliss Perry, Boston, 1926.

The Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and Ralph Waldo Emerson, edited by C. E. Norton, Boston, 1883; revised edition, 1888.

BIOGRAPHIES OF EMERSON

Students will find the following biographical works interesting and instructive.

Holmes, Oliver Wendell. *R. W. Emerson.* American Men of Letters, Boston, 1885.

Cabot J. Elliot. *Memoir of R. W. Emerson.* 2 vols., Boston, 1887.

Garnett, Richard. *Life of R. W. Emerson.* Great Writer Series, N. Y., 1888.

Woodberry, George E. *Ralph Waldo Emerson,* N. Y., 1907.

Firkins, O. W. *Ralph Waldo Emerson,* Boston, 1915.

Emerson, E. W. *Emerson in Concord,* Boston, 1888.

ESSAYS

ESSAYS

GIFTS

Gifts of one who loved me—
'Twas high time they came;
When he ceased to love me,
Time they stopped for shame.

1. It is said that the world is in a state of bankruptcy, that the world owes the world more than the world can pay, and ought to go into chancery,° and be sold. I do not think this general insolvency, which involves in some sort all the population, to be the reason of the difficulty experienced at Christmas and New Year, and other times, in bestowing gifts; since it is always so pleasant to be generous, though very vexatious to pay debts. But the impediment lies in the choosing. If, at any time, it comes into my head that a present is due from me to somebody, I am puzzled what to give until the opportunity is gone. Flowers and fruits are always fit presents; flowers, because they are a proud assertion that a ray of beauty outvalues all the utilities of the world. These gay natures contrast with the somewhat stern countenance of ordinary na-

ture: they are like music heard out of a workhouse. Nature does not cocker us: we are children, not pets: she is not fond: everything is dealt to us without fear or favor, after severe universal laws. Yet these delicate flowers look like the frolic and interference of love and beauty. Men use to tell us that we love flattery, even though we are not deceived by it, because it shows that we are of importance enough to be courted. Something like that pleasure, the flowers give us: what am I to whom these sweet hints are addressed? Fruits are acceptable gifts, because they are the flower of commodities, and admit of fantastic values being attached to them. If a man should send to me to come a hundred miles to visit him, and should set before me a basket of fine summer-fruit, I should think there was some proportion between the labor and the reward.

2. For common gifts, necessity makes pertinences and beauty every day, and one is glad when an imperative leaves him no option, since if the man at the door have no shoes, you have not to consider whether you could procure him a paint-box. And as it is always pleasing to see a man eat bread or drink water, in the house or out of doors, so it is always a great satisfaction to supply these first wants. Necessity does everything well. In our condition of universal

dependence, it seems heroic to let the petitioner be the judge of his necessity, and to give all that is asked, though at great inconvenience. If it be a fantastic desire, it is better to leave to others the office of punishing him. I can think of many parts I should prefer playing to that of the Furies.° Next to things of necessity, the rule for a gift, which one of my friends prescribed, is that we might convey to some person that which properly belonged to his character, and was easily associated with him in thought. But our tokens of compliment and love are for the most part barbarous. Rings and other jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only gift is a portion of thyself. Thou must bleed for me. Therefore the poet brings his poem; the shepherd, his lamb; the farmer, corn; the miner, a gem; the sailor, coral and shells; the painter, his picture; the girl, a handkerchief of her own sewing. This is right and pleasing, for it restores society in so far to its primary basis, when a man's biography is conveyed in his gift, and every man's wealth is an index of his merit. But it is a cold, lifeless business when you go to the shops to buy me something which does not represent your life and talent, but a goldsmith's. This is fit for kings, and rich men who represent kings, and a false state of property, to make presents of gold and silver stuffs,

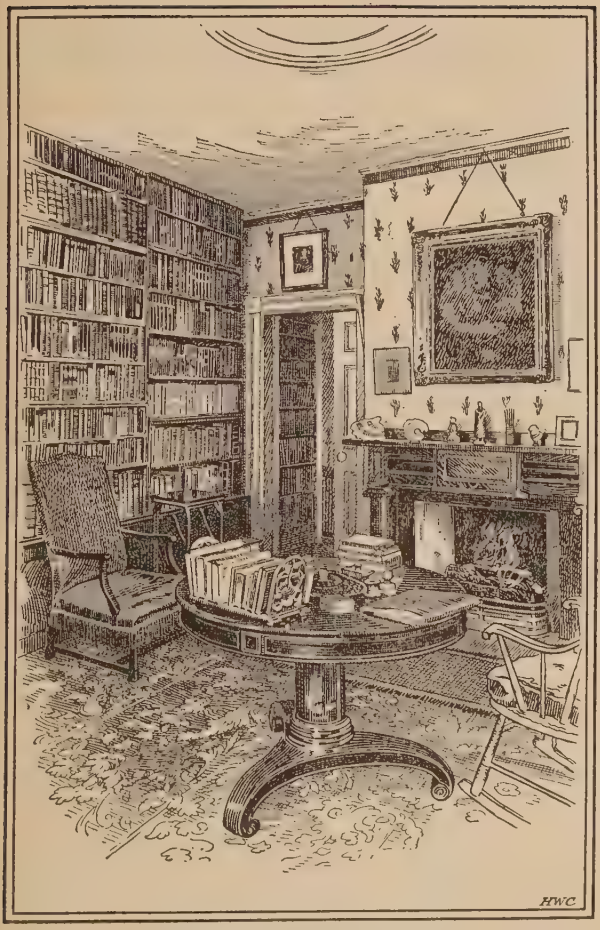
as a kind of symbolical sin-offering, or payment of blackmail.

3. The law of benefits is a difficult channel, which requires careful sailing, or rude boats. It is not the office of a man to receive gifts. How dare you give them? We wish to be self-sustained. We do not quite forgive a giver. The hand that feeds us is in some danger of being bitten. We can receive anything from love, for that is a way of receiving it from ourselves; but not from any one who assumes to bestow. We sometimes hate the meat which we eat, because there seems something of degrading dependence in living by it.

> Brother, if Jove to thee a present make,
> Take heed that from his hands thou nothing take.

We ask the whole. Nothing less will content us. We arraign society, if it do not give us besides earth, and fire, and water, opportunity, love, reverence, and objects of veneration.

4. He is a good man, who can receive a gift well. We are either glad or sorry at a gift, and both emotions are unbecoming. Some violence, I think, is done, some degradation borne, when I rejoice or grieve at a gift. I am sorry when my independence is invaded, or when a gift comes from such as do not know my spirit, and so the act is not supported; and if the gift



EMERSON'S STUDY, CONCORD

pleases me overmuch, then I should be ashamed that the donor should read my heart, and see that I love his commodity, and not him. The gift, to be true, must be the flowing of the giver unto me, correspondent to my flowing unto him. When the waters are at level, then my goods pass to him, and his to me. All his are mine, all mine his. I say to him, How can you give me this pot of oil, or this flagon of wine, when all your oil and wine is mine, which belief of mine this gift seems to deny? Hence the fitness of beautiful, not useful things for gifts. This giving is flat usurpation, and therefore when the beneficiary is ungrateful, as all beneficiaries hate all Timons, not at all considering the value of the gift, but looking back to the greater store it was taken from, I rather sympathize with the beneficiary, than with the anger of my lord, Timon.° For the expectation of gratitude is mean, and is continually punished by the total insensibility of the obliged person. It is a great happiness to get off without injury and heart-burning from one who has had the ill luck to be served by you. It is a very onerous business, this of being served, and the debtor naturally wishes to give you a slap. A golden text for these gentlemen is that which I so admire in the Buddhist,° who never thanks, and who says, "Do not flatter your benefactors."

5. The reason of these discords I conceive to be, that there is no commensurability between a man and any gift. You cannot give anything to a magnanimous person. After you have served him, he at once puts you in debt by his magnanimity. The service a man renders his friend is trivial and selfish compared with the service he knows his friend stood in readiness to yield him, alike before he had begun to serve his friend, and now also. Compared with that good-will I bear my friend, the benefit it is in my power to render him seems small. Besides, our action on each other, good as well as evil, is so incidental and at random that we can seldom hear the acknowledgments of any person who would thank us for a benefit, without some shame and humiliation. We can rarely strike a direct stroke, but must be content with an oblique one; we seldom have the satisfaction of yielding a direct benefit, which is directly received. But rectitude scatters favors on every side without knowing it, and receives with wonder the thanks of all people.

6. I fear to breathe any treason against the majesty of love, which is the genius and god of gifts, and to whom we must not affect to prescribe. Let him give kingdoms or flower-leaves indifferently. There are persons from whom we always expect fairy tokens; let us not cease to

expect them. This is prerogative, and not to be limited by our municipal rules. For the rest, I like to see that we cannot be bought and sold. The best of hospitality and of generosity is also not in the will, but in fate. I find that I am not much to you; you do not need me; you do not feel me; then am I thrust out of doors, though you proffer me house and lands. No services are of any value, but only likeness. When I have attempted to join myself to others by services, it proved an intellectual trick—no more. They eat your service like apples, and leave you out. But love them, and they feel you, and delight in you all the time.

MANNERS

1. Half the world, it is said, knows not how the other half live. Our exploring expedition saw the Feejee° islanders getting their dinner off human bones; and they are said to eat their own wives and children. The husbandry of the modern inhabitants of Gournou° (west of old Thebes) is philosophical to a fault. To set up their housekeeping, nothing is requisite but two or three earthen pots, a stone to grind meal, and a mat which is the bed. The house, namely, a tomb, is ready without rent or taxes. No rain can pass through the roof, and there is no door, for there is no want of one, as there is nothing to lose. If the house do not please them, they walk out and enter another, as there are several hundreds at their command. "It is somewhat singular," adds Belzoni,° to whom we owe this account, "to talk of happiness among people who live in sepulchers, among the corpses and rags of an ancient nation which they know nothing of." In the deserts of Borgoo,° the rock-Tibboos° still dwell in caves, like cliff-swallows, and the language of these negroes is compared by their neighbors to the shrieking of bats, and to the

whistling of birds. Again, the Bornoos° have no proper names; individuals are called after their height, thickness, or other accidental quality, and have nick-names merely. But the salt, the dates, the ivory, and the gold, for which these horrible regions are visited, find their way into countries where the purchaser and consumer can hardly be ranked in one race with these cannibals and man-stealers; countries where man serves himself with metals, wood, stone, glass, gum, cotton, silk, and wool; honors himself with architecture; writes laws, and contrives to execute his will through the hands of many nations; and, especially, establishes a select society, running through all the countries of intelligent men, a self-constituted aristocracy, or fraternity of the best, which, without written law or exact usage of any kind, perpetuates itself, colonizes every new-planted island, and adopts and makes its own whatever personal beauty or extraordinary native endowment anywhere appears.

2. What fact more conspicuous in modern history than the creation of the gentleman? Chivalry° is that, and loyalty is that, and, in English literature, half the drama, and all the novels, from Sir Philip Sidney° to Sir Walter Scott,° paint this figure. The word *gentleman*, which, like the word Christian, must hereafter characterize the present and the few preceding

centuries, by the importance attached to it, is a homage to personal and incommunicable properties. Frivolous and fantastic additions have got associated with the name, but the steady interest of mankind in it must be attributed to the valuable properties which it designates. An element which unites all the most forcible persons of every country, makes them intelligible and agreeable to each other, and is somewhat so precise that it is at once felt if an individual lack the masonic sign,° cannot be any casual product, but must be an average result of the character and faculties universally found in men. It seems a certain permanent average; as the atmosphere is a permanent composition, whilst so many gases are combined only to be decompounded. *Comme il faut*, is the Frenchman's description of good society, *as we must be*. It is a spontaneous fruit of talents and feelings of precisely that class who have most vigor, who take the lead in the world of this hour, and, though far from pure, far from constituting the gladdest and highest tone of human feeling, is as good as the whole society permits it to be. It is made of the spirit, more than of the talent of men, and is a compound result into which every great force enters as an ingredient, namely, virtue, wit, beauty, wealth, and power.

3. There is something equivocal in all the

words in use to express the excellence of manners and social cultivation, because the qualities are fluxional, and the last effect is assumed by the senses as the cause. The word *gentleman* has not any correlative abstract° to express the quality. *Gentility* is mean, and *gentilesse* is obsolete. But we must keep alive in the vernacular the distinction between *fashion*, a word of narrow and often sinister meaning, and the heroic character which the gentleman imports. The usual words, however, must be respected; they will be found to contain the root of the matter. The point of distinction in all this class of names, as courtesy, chivalry, fashion, and the like, is, that the flower and fruit, not the grain of the tree, are contemplated. It is beauty which is the aim this time, and not worth. The result is now in question, although our words intimate well enough the popular feeling, that the appearance supposes a substance. The gentleman is a man of truth, lord of his own actions, and expressing that lordship in his behavior, not in any manner dependent and servile either on persons, or opinions, or possessions. Beyond this fact of truth and real force, the word denotes good-nature and benevolence: manhood first, and then gentleness. The popular notion certainly adds a condition of ease and fortune; but that is a natural result of personal

force and love, that they should possess and dispense the goods of the world. In times of violence, every eminent person must fall in with many opportunities to approve his stoutness and worth; therefore every man's name that emerged at all from the mass in the feudal ages,° rattles in our ear like a flourish of trumpets. But personal force never goes out of fashion. That is still paramount to-day, and, in the moving crowd of good society, the men of valor and reality are known, and rise to their natural place. The competition is transferred from war to politics and trade, but the personal force appears readily enough in these new arenas.

4. Power first, or no leading class. In politics and in trade, bruisers and pirates are of better promise than talkers and clerks. God knows that all sorts of gentlemen knock at the door; but whenever used in strictness, and with any emphasis, the name will be found to point at original energy. It describes a man standing in his own right, and working after untaught methods. In a good lord, there must first be a good animal, at least to the extent of yielding the incomparable advantage of animal spirits. The ruling class must have more, but they must have these, giving in every company the sense of power, which makes things easy to be done which daunt the wise. The society

of the energetic class, in their friendly and festive meetings, is full of courage, and of attempts, which intimidate the pale scholar. The courage which girls exhibit is like a battle of Lundy's Lane,° or a sea-fight. The intellect relies on memory to make some supplies to face these extemporaneous squadrons. But memory is a base mendicant, with basket and badge, in the presence of these sudden masters. The rulers of society must be up to the work of the world, and equal to their versatile office: men of the right Cæsarian pattern,° who have great range of affinity. I am far from believing the timid maxim of Lord Falkland, "That for ceremony there must go two to it; since a bold fellow will go through the cunningest forms," and am of opinion that the gentleman is the bold fellow whose forms are not to be broken through; and only that plenteous nature is rightful master, which is the complement of whatever person it converses with. My gentleman gives the law where he is; he will outpray saints in chapel, outgeneral veterans in the field, and outshine all courtesy in the hall. He is good company for pirates, and good with academicians, so that it is useless to fortify yourself against him; he has the private entrance to all minds, and I could as easily exclude myself as him. The famous gentlemen of Asia and Europe have been of this strong

type: Saladin,° Sapor,° the Cid,° Julius Cæsar,° Scipio,° Alexander,° Pericles,° and the lordliest personages. They sat very carelessly in their chairs, and were too excellent themselves to value any condition at a high rate.

5. A plentiful fortune is reckoned necessary, in the popular judgment, to the completion of this man of the world, and it is a material deputy which walks through the dance which the first has led. Money is not essential, but this wide affinity is, which transcends the habits of clique and caste, and makes itself felt by men of all classes. If the aristocrat is only valid in fashionable circles, and not with truckmen, he will never be a leader in fashion; and if the man of the people cannot speak on equal terms with the gentleman, so that the gentleman shall perceive that he is already really of his own order, he is not to be feared. Diogenes,° Socrates,° and Epaminondas° are gentlemen of the best blood, who have chosen the condition of poverty, when that of wealth was equally open to them. I use these old names, but the men I speak of are my contemporaries. Fortune will not supply to every generation one of these well-appointed knights, but every collection of men furnishes some example of the class: and the politics of this country, and the trade of every town, are con-

trolled by these hardy and irresponsible doers, who have invention to take the lead, and a broad sympathy which puts them in fellowship with crowds, and makes their action popular.

6. The manners of this class are observed and caught with devotion by men of taste. The association of these masters with each other, and with men intelligent of their merits, is mutually agreeable and stimulating. The good forms, the happiest expressions of each, are repeated and adopted. By swift consent, everything superfluous is dropped, everything graceful is renewed. Fine manners show themselves formidable to the uncultivated man. They are a subtler science of defence to parry and intimidate; but once matched by the skill of the other party, they drop the point of the sword—points and fences disappear, and the youth finds himself in a more transparent atmosphere, wherein life is a less troublesome game, and not a misunderstanding rises between the players. Manners aim to facilitate life, to get rid of impediments, and bring the man pure to energize. They aid our dealing and conversation, as a railway aids traveling, by getting rid of all avoidable obstructions of the road, and leaving nothing to be conquered but pure space. These forms very soon become fixed, and a fine sense of propriety is cultivated with more heed, that it becomes a

badge of social and civil distinctions. Thus grows up Fashion, an equivocal semblance, the most puissant, the most fantastic and frivolous, the most feared and followed, and which morals and violence assault in vain.

7. There exists a strict relation between the class of power and the exclusive and polished circles. The last are always filled or filling from the first. The strong men usually give some allowance even to the petulances of fashion, for that affinity they find in it. Napoleon,° child of the revolution, destroyer of the old noblesse, never ceased to court the Faubourg St. Germain°: doubtless with the feeling that fashion is a homage to men of his stamp. Fashion, though in a strange way, represents all manly virtue. It is a virtue gone to seed: it is a kind of posthumous honor. It does not often caress the great, but the children of the great: it is a hall of the Past. It usually sets its face against the great of this hour. Great men are not commonly in its halls: they are absent in the field; they are working, not triumphing. Fashion is made up of their children; of those, who, through the value and virtue of somebody, have acquired lustre to their name, marks of distinction, means of cultivation and generosity, and, in their physical organization, a certain health and excellence, which secures to them, if not the highest

power to work, yet high power to enjoy. The class of power, the working heroes, the Cortez,° the Nelson,° the Napoleon, see that this is the festivity and permanent celebration of such as they; that fashion is funded talent; is Mexico, Marengo,° and Trafalgar° beaten out thin; that the brilliant names of fashion run back to just such busy names as their own, fifty or sixty years ago. They are the sowers, their sons shall be the reapers, and *their* sons, in the ordinary course of things, must yield the possession of the harvest to new competitors with keener eyes and stronger frames. The city is recruited from the country. In the year 1805, it is said, every legitimate monarch in Europe was imbecile. The city would have died out, rotted, and exploded long ago, but that it was reinforced from the fields. It is only country which came to town day before yesterday, that is city and court to-day.

8. Aristocracy and fashion are certain inevitable results. These mutual selections are indestructible. If they provoke anger in the least favored class, and the excluded majority revenge themselves on the excluding minority, by the strong hand, and kill them, at once a new class finds itself at the top as certainly as cream rises in a bowl of milk; and if the people should destroy class after class, until two men

only were left, one of these would be the leader, and would be involuntarily served and copied by the other. You may keep this minority out of sight and out of mind, but it is tenacious of life, and is one of the estates of the realm. I am the more struck with this tenacity, when I see its work. It respects the administration of such unimportant matters, that we should not look for any durability in its rule. We sometimes meet men under some strong moral influence, as a patriotic, a literary, a religious movement, and feel that the moral sentiment rules man and nature. We think all other distinctions and ties will be slight and fugitive, this of caste or fashion, for example; yet come from year to year, and see how permanent that is, in this Boston or New York life of man, where, too, it has not the least countenance from the law of the land. Not in Egypt or in India a firmer or more impassable line. Here are associations whose ties go over, and under, and through it, a meeting of merchants, a military corps, a college-class, a fire-club, a professional association, a political, a religious convention; the persons seem to draw inseparably near; yet, that assembly once dispersed, its members will not in the year meet again. Each returns to his degree in the scale of good society, porcelain remains porcelain, and earthen earthen. The objects of

fashion may be frivolous, or fashion may be objectless, but the nature of this union and selection can be neither frivolous nor accidental. Each man's rank in that perfect graduation depends on some symmetry in his structure, or some agreement in his structure to the symmetry of society. Its doors unbar instantaneously to a natural claim of their own kind. A natural gentleman finds his way in, and will keep the oldest patrician out, who has lost his intrinsic rank. Fashion understands itself; good-breeding and personal superiority of whatever country readily fraternize with those of every other. The chiefs of savage tribes have distinguished themselves in London and Paris by the purity of their tournure.

9. To say what good of fashion we can, it rests on reality, and hates nothing so much as pretenders; to exclude and mystify pretenders, and send them into everlasting "Coventry°," is its delight. We contemn, in turn, every other gift of men in the world; but the habit, even in little and the least matters, of not appealing to any but our own sense of propriety, constitutes the foundation of all chivalry. There is almost no kind of self-reliance, so it be sane and proportioned, which fashion does not occasionally adopt, and give it the freedom of its saloons. A sainted soul is always elegant, and, if it will, passes unchallenged into the

most guarded ring. But so will Jock the teamster pass, in some crisis that brings him thither, and find favor, as long as his head is not giddy with the new circumstance, and the iron shoes do not wish to dance in waltzes and cotillions. For there is nothing settled in manners, but the laws of behavior yield to the energy of the individual. The maiden at her first ball, the countryman at a city dinner, believes that there is a ritual according to which every act and compliment must be performed, or the failing party must be cast out of this presence. Later, they learn that good sense and character make their own forms every moment, and speak or abstain, to take wine or refuse it, stay or go, sit in a chair or sprawl with children on the floor, or stand on their head, or what else soever, in a new and aboriginal way: and that strong will is always in fashion, let who will be unfashionable. All that fashion demands is composure and self-content. A circle of men perfectly well-bred would be a company of sensible persons, in which every man's native manners and character appeared. If the fashionist have not this quality, he is nothing. We are such lovers of self-reliance that we excuse in a man many sins, if he will show us a complete satisfaction in his position, which asks no leave to be of mine, or any man's good opinion. But any

deference to some eminent man or woman of the world forfeits all privilege of nobility. He is an underling: I have nothing to do with him; I will speak with his master. A man should not go where he cannot carry his whole sphere or society with him—not bodily, the whole circle of his friends, but atmospherically. He should preserve in a new company the same attitude of mind and reality of relation, which his daily associates draw him to, else he is shorn of his best beams, and will be an orphan in the merriest club. "If you could see Vich Ian Vohr with his tail on°!—" But Vich Ian Vohr must always carry his belongings in some fashion, if not added as honor, then severed as disgrace.

10. There will always be in society certain persons who are mercuries of its approbation, and whose glance will at any time determine for the curious their standing in the world. These are the chamberlains of the lesser gods. Accept their coldness as an omen of grace with the loftier deities, and allow them all their privilege. They are clear in their office, nor could they be thus formidable without their own merits. But do not measure the importance of this class by their pretension, or imagine that a fop can be the dispenser of honor and shame. They pass also at their just rate; for how can they otherwise, in circles

which exist as a sort of herald's office° for the sifting of character?

11. As the first thing man requires of man is reality, so that appears in all the forms of society. We pointedly, and by name, introduce the parties to each other. Know you before all heaven and earth that this is Andrew, and this is Gregory—they look each other in the eye; they grasp each other's hand, to identify and signalize each other. It is a great satisfaction. A gentleman never dodges: his eyes look straight forward, and he assures the other party, first of all, that he has been met. For what is it that we seek in so many visits and hospitalities? Is it your draperies, pictures, and decorations? Or, do we not insatiably ask, Was a man in the house? I may easily go into a great household where there is much substance, excellent provision for comfort, luxury, and taste, and yet not encounter there any Amphitryon,° who shall subordinate these appendages. I may go into a cottage, and find a farmer who feels that he is the man I have come to see, and fronts me accordingly. It was therefore a very natural point of old feudal etiquette, that a gentleman who received a visit, though it were of his sovereign, should not leave his roof, but should wait his arrival at the door of his house. No house, though it were the Tuileries,° or the Escurial,° is good

for anything without a master. And yet we are not often gratified by this hospitality. Everybody we know surrounds himself with a fine house, fine books, conservatory, gardens, equipage, and all manner of toys, as screens to interpose between himself and his guests. Does it not seem as if man was of a very sly, elusive nature, and dreaded nothing so much as a full renconter front to front with his fellow? It were unmerciful, I know, quite to abolish the use of these screens, which are of eminent convenience, whether the guest is too great, or too little. We call together many friends who keep each other in play, or by luxuries and ornaments we amuse the young people, and guard our retirement. Or if, perchance, a searching realist comes to our gate, before whose eyes we have no care to stand, then again we run to our curtain, and hide ourselves as Adam at the voice of the Lord God in the garden. Cardinal Caprara, the Pope's legate at Paris, defended himself from the glances of Napoleon, by an immense pair of green spectacles. Napoleon remarked them, and speedily managed to rally them off: and yet Napoleon, in his turn, was not great enough with eight hundred thousand troops at his back, to face a pair of free-born eyes, but fenced himself with etiquette, and within triple barriers of reserve: and, as all the world knows

from Madame de Stael,° was wont, when he found himself observed, to discharge his face of all expression. But emperors and rich men are by no means the most skillful masters of good manners. No rent-roll nor army-list can dignify skulking and dissimulations: and the first point of courtesy must always be truth, as really all the forms of good-breeding point that way.

12. I have just been reading, in Mr. Hazlitt's translation, Montaigne's° account of his journey into Italy, and am struck with nothing more agreeably than the self-respecting fashions of the time. His arrival in each place, the arrival of a gentleman of France, is an event of some consequence. Wherever he goes he pays a visit to whatever prince or gentleman of note resides upon his road, as a duty to himself and to civilization. When he leaves any house in which he has lodged for a few weeks, he causes his arms to be painted and hung up as a perpetual sign to the house, as was the custom of gentlemen.

13. The complement of this graceful self-respect, and that of all the points of good breeding I most require and insist upon, is deference. I like that every chair should be a throne, and hold a king. I prefer a tendency to stateliness, to an excess of fellowship. Let the incommunicable objects of nature and the

metaphysical isolation of man teach us independence. Let us not be too much acquainted. I would have a man enter his house through a hall filled with heroic and sacred sculptures, that he might not want the hint of tranquillity and self-poise. We should meet each morning, as from foreign countries, and spending the day together, should depart at night, as into foreign countries. In all things I would have the island of a man inviolate. Let us sit apart as the gods, talking from peak to peak all round Olympus.° No degree of affection need invade this religion. This is myrrh and rosemary to keep the other sweet. Lovers should guard their strangeness. If they forgive too much, all slides into confusion and meanness. It is easy to push this deference to a Chinese etiquette; but coolness and absence of heat and haste indicate fine qualities. A gentleman makes no noise; a lady is serene. Proportionate is our disgust at those invaders who fill a studious house with blast and running, to secure some paltry convenience. Not less I dislike a low sympathy of each with his neighbor's needs. Must we have a good understanding with one another's palates? as foolish people who have lived long together, know when each wants salt or sugar. I pray my companion, if he wishes for bread, to ask me for bread, and if he wishes for sassafras or arsenic, to

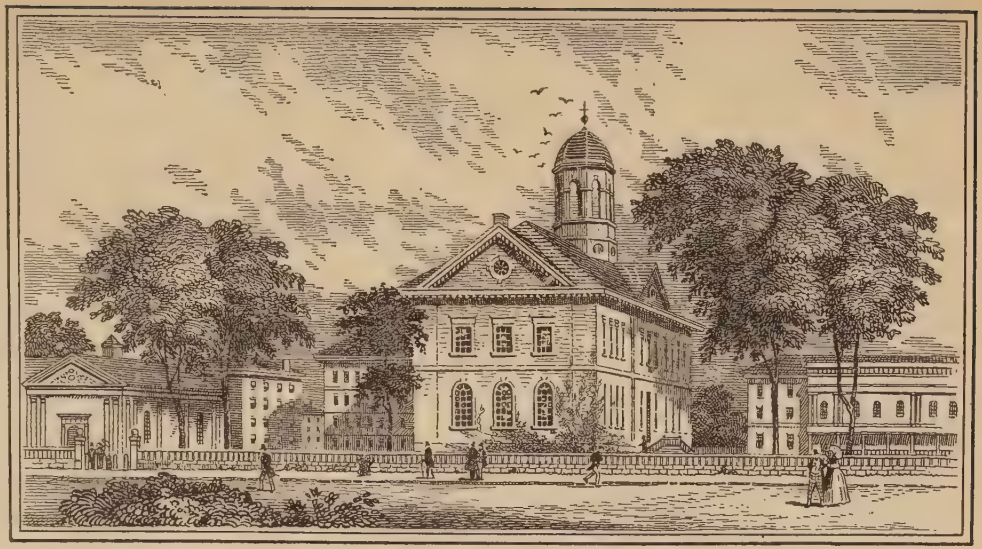
ask me for them, and not to hold out his plate, as if I knew already. Every natural function can be dignified by deliberation and privacy. Let us leave hurry to slaves. The compliments and ceremonies of our breeding should recall, however remotely, the grandeur of our destiny.

14. The flower of courtesy does not very well bide handling, but if we dare to open another leaf, and explore what parts go to its conformation, we shall find also an intellectual quality. To the leaders of men, the brain as well as the flesh and the heart must furnish a proportion. Defect in manners is usually the defect of fine perceptions. Men are too coarsely made for the delicacy of beautiful carriage and customs. It is not quite sufficient to good breeding, a union of kindness and independence. We imperatively require a perception of, and a homage to, beauty in our companions. Other virtues are in request in the field and work-yard, but a certain degree of taste is not to be spared in those we sit with. I could better eat with one who did not respect the truth or the laws, than with a sloven and unpresentable person. Moral qualities rule the world, but at short distances the senses are despotic. The same discrimination of fit and fair runs out, if with less rigor, into all parts of life. The average spirit of the energetic class is good sense, acting under certain limitations and to

certain ends. It entertains every natural gift. Social in its nature, it respects everything which tends to unite men. It delights in measure. The love of beauty is mainly the love of measure or proportion. The person who screams, or uses the superlative degree, or converses with heat, puts whole drawing-rooms to flight. If you wish to be loved, love measure. You must have genius, or a prodigious usefulness, if you will hide the want of measure. This perception comes in to polish and perfect the parts of the social instrument. Society will pardon much to genius and special gifts, but, being in its nature a convention, it loves what is conventional, or what belongs to coming together. That makes the good and bad of manners, namely, what helps or hinders fellowship. For, fashion is not good sense absolute, but relative; not good sense private, but good sense entertaining company. It hates corners and sharp points of character, hates quarrelsome, egotistical, solitary, and gloomy people; hates whatever can interfere with total blending of parties; whilst it values all peculiarities as in the highest degree refreshing, which can consist with good fellowship. And besides the general infusion of wit to heighten civility, the direct splendor of intellectual power is ever welcome in fine society as the costliest addition to its rule and its credit.

15. The dry light must shine in to adorn our festival, but it must be tempered and shaded, or that will also offend. Accuracy is essential to beauty, and quick perceptions to politeness, but not too quick perceptions. One may be too punctual and too precise. He must leave the omniscience of business at the door when he comes into the palace of beauty. Society loves creole natures and sleepy, languishing manners, so that they cover sense, grace, and goodwill; the air of drowsy strength, which disarms criticism; perhaps, because such a person seems to reserve himself for the best of the game and not spend himself on surfaces; an ignoring eye, which does not see the annoyances, shifts, and inconveniences that cloud the brow and smother the voice of the sensitive.

16. Therefore, besides personal force and so much perception as constitutes unerring taste, society demands in its patrician class another element already intimated, which it significantly terms good-nature, expressing all degrees of generosity, from the lowest willingness and faculty to oblige, up to the heights of magnanimity and love. Insight we must have, or we shall run against one another and miss the way to our food; but intellect is selfish and barren. The secret of success in society is a certain heartiness and sympathy. A man who



An Early View of Harvard College

is not happy in the company cannot find any word in his memory that will fit the occasion. All his information is a little impertinent. A man who is happy there, finds in every turn of the conversation equally lucky occasions for the introduction of that which he has to say. The favorites of society and what it calls *whole souls,* are able men, and of more spirit than wit, who have no uncomfortable egotism, but who exactly fill the hour and the company, contented and contenting, at a marriage or a funeral, a ball or a jury, a water-party or a shooting-match. England, which is rich in gentlemen, furnished, in the beginning of the present century, a good model of that genius which the world loves in Mr. Fox,° who added to his great abilities the most social disposition, and real love of men. Parliamentary history has few better passages than the debate, in which Burke° and Fox separated in the House of Commons, when Fox urged on his old friend the claims of old friendship with such tenderness that the house was moved to tears. Another anecdote is so close to my matter, that I must hazard the story. A tradesman who had long dunned him for a note of three hundred guineas, found him one day counting gold, and demanded payment. "No," said Fox, "I owe this money to Sheridan°: it is a debt of honor: if an accident should hap-

pen to me, he has nothing to show." "Then," said the creditor, "I change my debt into a debt of honor," and tore the note in pieces. Fox thanked the man for his confidence, and paid him, saying, "his debt was of older standing, and Sheridan must wait." Lover of liberty, friend of the Hindoo, friend of the African slave, he possessed a great personal popularity; and Napoleon said of him on the occasion of his visit to Paris, in 1805, "Mr. Fox will always hold the first place in an assembly at the Tuileries."

17. We may easily seem ridiculous in our eulogy of courtesy, whenever we insist on benevolence as its foundation. The painted phantasm Fashion rises to cast a species of derision on what we say. But I will neither be driven from some allowance to Fashion as a symbolic institution, nor from the belief that love is the basis of courtesy. We must obtain *that*, if we can; but by all means we must affirm *this*. Life owes much of its spirit to these sharp contrasts. Fashion which affects to be honor, is often, in all men's experience, only a ball-room code. Yet so long as it is the highest circle, in the imagination of the best heads on the planet, there is something necessary and excellent in it; for it is not to be supposed that men have agreed to be the dupes of anything preposterous; and the respect which these

mysteries inspire in the most rude and sylvan characters, and the curiosity with which details of high life are read, betray the universality of the love of cultivated manners. I know that a comic disparity would be felt, if we should enter the acknowledged "first circles," and apply these terrific standards of justice, beauty, and benefit, to the individuals actually found there. Monarchs and heroes, sages and lovers, these gallants are not. Fashion has many classes and many rules of probation and admission; and not the best alone. There is not only the right of conquest, which genius pretends—the individual, demonstrating his natural aristocracy best of the best; but less claims will pass for the time, for Fashion loves lions, and points, like Circe,° to her horned company. This gentleman is this afternoon arrived from Denmark; and that is my Lord Ride, who came yesterday from Bagdad; here is Captain Friese, from Cape Turnagain, and Captain Symmes,° from the interior of the earth; and Monsieur Jovaire, who came down this morning in a balloon; Mr. Hobnail, the reformer, and Reverend Jul Bat, who has converted the whole torrid zone in his Sunday school; and Signor Torre del Greco, who extinguished Vesuvius by pouring into it the Bay of Naples; Spahi, the Persian ambassador; and Tul Wil Shan, the exiled nabob of Nepaul, whose saddle

is the new moon. But these are monsters of one day, and to-morrow will be dismissed to their holes and dens; for in these rooms every chair is waited for. The artist, the scholar, and, in general, the clerisy, wins its way up into these places, and gets represented here, somewhat on this footing of conquest. Another mode is to pass through all the degrees, spending a year and a day in St. Michael's Square,° being steeped in Cologne water, and perfumed, and dined, and introduced, and properly grounded in all the biography, and politics, and anecdotes of the boudoirs.

18. Yet these fineries may have grace and wit. Let there be grotesque sculpture about the gates and offices of temples. Let the creed and commandments even have the saucy homage of parody. The forms of politeness universally express benevolence in superlative degrees. What if they are in the mouths of selfish men, and used as means of selfishness? What if the false gentleman almost bows the true out of the world? What if the false gentleman contrives so to address his companions, as civilly to exclude all others from his discourse, and also to make them feel excluded? Real service will not lose its nobleness. All generosity is not merely French and sentimental; nor is it to be concealed, that living blood and a passion of kindness does at last distinguish God's gentle-

man from Fashion's. The epitaph of Sir Jenkin Grout is not wholly unintelligible to the present age. "Here lies Sir Jenkin Grout, who loved his friend, and persuaded his enemy: what his mouth ate, his hand paid for: what his servants robbed, he restored: if a woman gave him pleasure, he supported her in pain: he never forgot his children: and whoso touched his finger, drew after it his whole body." Even the line of heroes is not utterly extinct. There is still ever some admirable person in plain clothes, standing on the wharf, who jumps in to rescue a drowning man; there is still some absurd inventor of charities; some guide and comforter of runaway slaves; some friend of Poland; some Philhellene°; some fanatic who plants shade-trees for the second and third generation, and orchards when he is grown old; some well-concealed piety; some just man happy in an ill-fame; some youth ashamed of the favors of fortune, and impatiently casting them on other shoulders. And these are the centers of society, on which it returns for fresh impulses. These are the creators of Fashion, which is an attempt to organize beauty of behavior. The beautiful and the generous are, in the theory, the doctors and apostles of this church: Scipio,° and the Cid, and Sir Philip Sidney,° and Washington, and every pure and valiant heart, who worshiped Beauty by word

and by deed. The persons who constitute the natural aristocracy are not found in the actual aristocracy, or only on its edge: as the chemical energy of the spectrum is found to be greatest just outside of the spectrum. Yet that is the infirmity of the seneschals, who do not know their sovereign when he appears. The theory of society supposes the existence and sovereignty of these. It divines afar off their coming. It says with the elder gods:

> "As Heaven and Earth are fairer far°
> Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though once chiefs;
> And as we show beyond that Heaven and Earth,
> In form and shape compact and beautiful;
> So, on our heels a fresh perfection treads;
> A power, more strong in beauty, born of us,
> And fated to excel us, as we pass
> In glory that old Darkness:
> ———for, 'tis the eternal law,
> That first in beauty shall be first in might."

19. Therefore, within the ethnical circle of good society, there is a narrower and higher circle, concentration of its light, and flower of courtesy, to which there is always a tacit appeal of pride and reference, as to its inner and imperial court, the parliament of love and chivalry. And this is constituted of those persons in whom heroic dispositions are native, with the love of beauty, the delight in society, and the power to embellish the passing day. If

the individuals who compose the purest circles of aristocracy in Europe, the guarded blood of centuries, should pass in review, in such manner as that we could, leisurely and critically, inspect their behavior, we might find no gentleman, and no lady; for although excellent specimens of courtesy and high-breeding would gratify us in the assemblage, in the particulars, we should detect offense. Because, elegance comes of no breeding, but of birth. There must be romance of character, or the most fastidious exclusion of impertinencies will not avail. It must be genius which takes that direction; it must be not courteous, but courtesy. High behavior is as rare in fiction as it is in fact. Scott is praised for the fidelity with which he painted the demeanor and conversation of the superior classes. Certainly, kings and queens, nobles and great ladies, had some right to complain of the absurdity that had been put in their mouths, before the days of Waverley°; but neither does Scott's dialogue bear criticism. His lords brave each other in smart epigrammatic speeches, but the dialogue is in costume, and does not please on the second reading; it is not warm with life. In Shakespeare° alone the speakers do not strut and bridle, the dialogue is easily great, and he adds to so many titles that of being the best-bred man in England, and in Christendom. Once or twice in a

lifetime we are permitted to enjoy the charm of noble manners, in the presence of a man or woman who have no bar in their nature, but whose character emanates freely in their word and gesture. A beautiful form is better than a beautiful face; a beautiful behavior is better than a beautiful form: it gives a higher pleasure than statues or pictures; it is the finest of the fine arts. A man is but a little thing in the midst of the objects of nature, yet, by the moral quality radiating from his countenance, he may abolish all considerations of magnitude, and in his manners equal the majesty of the world. I have seen an individual whose manners, though wholly within the conventions of elegant society, were never learned there, but were original and commanding, and held out protection and prosperity; one who did not need the aid of a court-suit, but carried the holiday in his eye; who exhilarated the fancy by flinging wide the doors of new modes of existence; who shook off the captivity of etiquette, with happy, spirited bearing, good-natured and free as Robin Hood°; yet with the port of an emperor,—if need be, calm, serious, and fit to stand the gaze of millions.

20. The open air and the fields, the street and public chambers, are the places where Man executes his will; let him yield or divide the scepter at the door of the house. Woman, with

her instinct of behavior, instantly detects in man a love of trifles, any coldness or imbecility, or, in short, any want of that large, flowing, and magnanimous deportment, which is indispensable as an exterior in the hall. Our American institutions have been friendly to her, and at this moment I esteem it a chief felicity of this country that it excels in women. A certain awkward consciousness of inferiority in the men may give rise to the new chivalry in behalf of Woman's Rights. Certainly, let her be as much better placed in the laws and in social forms, as the most zealous reformer can ask, but I confide so entirely in her inspiring and musical nature that I believe only herself can show us how she shall be served. The wonderful generosity of her sentiments raises her at times into heroical and godlike regions, and verifies the pictures of Minerva,° Juno,° or Polymnia°; and, by the firmness with which she treads her upward path, she convinces the coarsest calculators that another road exists than that which their feet know. But besides those who make good in our imagination the place of muses and of Delphic Sibyls,° are there not women who fill our vase with wine and roses to the brim, so that the wine runs over and fills the house with perfume; who inspire us with courtesy; who unloose our tongues, and we speak; who anoint our eyes,

and we see? We say things we never thought to have said; for once our walls of habitual reserve vanished, and left us at large; we were children playing with children in a wide field of flowers. Steep us, we cried, in these influences, for days, for weeks, and we shall be sunny poets, and will write out in many-colored words the romance that you are. Was it Hafiz° or Firdousi° that said of his Persian Lilla, "She was an elemental force, and astonished me by her amount of life, when I saw her day after day radiating, every instant, redundant joy and grace on all around her. She was a solvent powerful to reconcile all heterogeneous persons into one society; like air or water, an element of such a great range of affinities that it combines readily with a thousand substances. Where she is present, all others will be more than they are wont. She was a unit and whole, so that whatsoever she did, became her. She had too much sympathy and desire to please, than that you could say, her manners were marked with dignity, yet no princess could surpass her clear and erect demeanor on each occasion. She did not study the Persian grammar, nor the books of the seven poets, but all the poems of the seven seemed to be written upon her. For, though the bias of her nature was not to thought, but to sympathy, yet was

she so perfect in her own nature, as to meet intellectual persons by the fullness of her heart, warming them by her sentiments; believing, as she did, that by dealing nobly with all, all would show themselves noble."

21. I know that this Byzantine° pile of chivalry of Fashion, which seems so fair and picturesque to those who look at the contemporary facts for science or for entertainment, is not equally pleasant to all spectators. The constitution of our society makes it a giant's castle to the ambitious youth who have not found their names enrolled in its Golden Book,° and whom it has excluded from its coveted honors and privileges. They have yet to learn that its seeming grandeur is shadowy and relative; it is great by their allowance; its proudest gates will fly open at the approach of their courage and virtue. For the present distress, however, of those who are predisposed to suffer from the tyrannies of this caprice, there are easy remedies. To remove your residence a couple of miles, or at most four, will commonly relieve the most extreme susceptibility. For the advantages which fashion values are plants which thrive in very confined localities, in a few streets, namely. Out of this precinct, they go for nothing; are of no use in the farm, in the forest, in the market, in war, in

the nuptial society, in the literary or scientific circle, at sea, in friendship, in the heaven of thought or virtue.

22. But we have lingered long enough in these painted courts. The worth of the thing signified must vindicate our taste for the emblem. Everything that is called fashion and courtesy humbles itself before the cause and fountain of honor, creator of titles and dignities, namely, the heart of love. This is the royal blood, this is the fire, which, in all countries and contingencies, will work after its kind and conquer and expand all that approaches it. This gives new meanings to every fact. This impoverishes the rich, suffering no grandeur but its own. What *is* rich? Are you rich enough to help anybody? to succor the unfashionable and the eccentric? rich enough to make the Canadian in his wagon, the itinerant with his consul's paper which commends him "To the charitable," the swarthy Italian with his few broken words of English, the lame pauper hunted by overseers from town to town, even the poor insane or besotted wreck of man or woman, feel the noble exception of your presence and your house, from the general bleakness and stoniness; to make such feel that they were greeted with a voice which made them both remember and hope? What is vulgar, but to refuse the claim on acute and conclusive reasons? What is gentle, but to al-

low it, and give their heart and yours one holiday from the national caution? Without the rich heart wealth is an ugly beggar. The king of Schiraz° could not afford to be so bountiful as the poor Osman° who dwelt at his gate. Osman had a humanity so broad and deep, that although his speech was so bold and free with the Koran° as to disgust all the dervishes, yet was there never a poor outcast, eccentric, or insane man, some fool who had cut off his beard, or who had been mutilated under a vow, or had a pet madness in his brain, but fled at once to him,—that great heart lay there so sunny and hospitable in the center of the country,—that it seemed as if the instinct of all sufferers drew them to his side. And the madness which he harbored, he did not share. Is not this to be rich? this only to be rightly rich?

23. But I shall hear without pain, that I play the courtier very ill, and talk of that which I do not well understand. It is easy to see, that what is called by distinction society and fashion, has good laws as well as bad, has much that is necessary, and much that is absurd. Too good for banning, and too bad for blessing, it reminds us of a tradition of the pagan mythology, in any attempt to settle its character. "I overheard Jove, one day," said Silenus,° "talking of destroying the earth; he

said it had failed; they were all rogues and vixens, who went from bad to worse, as fast as the days succeeded each other. Minerva° said she hoped not; they were only ridiculous little creatures, with this odd circumstance, that they had a blur, or indeterminate aspect, seen far or seen near; if you called them bad, they would appear so; if you called them good, they would appear so; and there was no one person or action among them which would not puzzle her owl, much more all Olympus, to know whether it was fundamentally bad or good."

FRIENDSHIP

1. We have a great deal more kindness than is ever spoken. Barring all the selfishness that chills like east winds the world, the whole human family is bathed with an element of love like a fine ether. How many persons we meet in houses, whom we scarcely speak to, whom yet we honor, and who honor us! How many we see in the street, or sit with in church, whom, though silently, we warmly rejoice to be with! Read the language of these wandering eye-beams. The heart knoweth.

2. The effect of the indulgence of this human affection is a certain cordial exhilaration. In poetry, and in common speech, the emotions of benevolence and complacency which are felt toward others, are likened to the material effects of fire; so swift, or much more swift, more active, more cheering are these fine inward irradiations. From the highest degree of passionate love to the lowest degree of good will they make the sweetness of life.

3. Our intellectual and active powers increase with our affection. The scholar sits down to write, and all his years of meditation do not furnish him with one good thought or

happy expression; but it is necessary to write a letter to a friend, and, forthwith, troops of gentle thoughts invest themselves, on every hand, with chosen words. See, in any house where virtue and self-respect abide, the palpitation which the approach of a stranger causes. A commended stranger is expected and announced, and an uneasiness between pleasure and pain invades all the hearts of a household. His arrival almost brings fear to the good hearts that would welcome him. The house is dusted, all things fly into their places, the old coat is exchanged for the new, and they must get up a dinner if they can. Of a commended stranger, only the good report is told by others, only the good and new is heard by us. He stands to us for humanity. He is, what we wish. Having imagined and invested him, we ask how we should stand related in conversation and action with such a man, and are uneasy with fear. The same idea exalts conversation with him. We talk better than we are wont. We have the nimblest fancy, a richer memory, and our dumb devil has taken leave for the time. For long hours we can continue a series of sincere, graceful, rich communications, drawn from the oldest, secretest experience, so that they who sit by, of our own kinsfolk and acquaintance, shall feel a lively surprise at our unusual powers. But as

soon as the stranger begins to intrude his partialities, his definitions, his defects, into the conversation, it is all over. He has heard the first, the last and best, he will ever hear from us. He is no stranger now. Vulgarity, ignorance, misapprehension, are old acquaintances. Now, when he comes, he may get the order, the dress, and the dinner, but the throbbing of the heart, and the communications of the soul, no more.

4. What is so pleasant as these jets of affection which relume a young world for me again? What is so delicious as a just and firm encounter of two, in a thought, in a feeling? How beautiful, on their approach to this beating heart, the steps and forms of the gifted and the true! The moment we indulge our affections, the earth is metamorphosed; there is no winter, and no night; all tragedies, all ennuis vanish; all duties even; nothing fills the proceeding eternity but the forms all radiant of beloved persons. Let the soul be assured that somewhere in the universe it should rejoin its friend, and it would be content and cheerful alone for a thousand years.

5. I awoke this morning with devout thanksgiving for my friends, the old and the new. Shall I not call God, the Beautiful, who daily showeth himself so to me in his gifts? I chide society, I embrace solitude, and yet I am not

so ungrateful as not to see the wise, the lovely, and the noble-minded, as from time to time they pass my gate. Who hears me, who understands me, becomes mine,—a possession for all time. Nor is nature so poor, but she gives me this joy several times, and thus we weave social threads of our own, a new web of relations; and, as many thoughts in succession substantiate themselves, we shall by-and-by stand in a new world of our own creation, and no longer strangers and pilgrims in a traditionary globe. My friends have come to me unsought. The great God gave them to me. By oldest right, by the divine affinity of virtue with itself, I find them, or rather, not I, but the Deity in me and in them, both deride and cancel the thick walls of individual character, relation, age, sex, and circumstance, at which he usually connives, and now makes many one. High thanks I owe you, excellent lovers, who carry out the world for me to new and noble depths, and enlarge the meaning of all my thoughts. These are new poetry of the first Bard—poetry without stop—hymn, ode, and epic, poetry still flowing, Apollo° and the Muses° chanting still. Will these two separate themselves from me again, or some of them? I know not, but I fear it not; for my relation to them is so pure, that we hold by simple affinity, and the Genius of my life being thus

social, the same affinity will exert its energy on whomsoever is as noble as these men and women, wherever I may be.

6. I confess to an extreme tenderness of nature on this point. It is almost dangerous to me to "crush the sweet poison of misusèd wine°" of the affections. A new person is to me a great event, and hinders me from sleep. I have had such fine fancies lately about two or three persons, as have given me delicious hours; but the joy ends in the day; it yields no fruit. Thought is not born of it; my action is very little modified. I must feel pride in my friend's accomplishments as if they were mine, and a property in his virtues. I feel as warmly when he is praised, as the lover when he hears applause of his engaged maiden. We overestimate the conscience of our friend. His goodness seems better than our goodness, his nature finer, his temptations less. Everything that is his,—his name, his form, his dress, books and instruments,—fancy enhances. Our own thought sounds new and larger from his mouth.

7. Yet the systole and diastole° of the heart are not without their analogy in the ebb and flow of love. Friendship, like the immortality of the soul, is too good to be believed. The lover, beholding his maiden, half knows that she is not verily that which he worships; and

in the golden hour of friendship, we are surprised with shades of suspicion and unbelief. We doubt that we bestow on our hero the virtues in which he shines, and afterward worship the form to which we have ascribed this divine inhabitation. In strictness, the soul does not respect men as it respects itself. In strict science, all persons underlie the same condition of an infinite remoteness. Shall we fear to cool our love by mining for the metaphysical foundation of this Elysian° temple? Shall I not be as real as the things I see? If I am, I shall not fear to know them for what they are. Their essence is not less beautiful than their appearance, though it needs finer organs for its apprehension. The root of the plant is not unsightly to science, though for chaplets and festoons we cut the stem short. And I must hazard the production of the bald fact amid these pleasing reveries, though it should prove an Egyptian skull at our banquet.° A man who stands united with his thought, conceives magnificently to himself. He is conscious of a universal success, even though bought by uniform particular failures. No advantages, no powers, no gold or force can be any match for him. I cannot choose but rely on my own poverty, more than on your wealth. I cannot make your consciousness tantamount to mine.

Only the star dazzles; the planet has a faint, moon-like ray. I hear what you say of the admirable parts and tried temper of the party you praise, but I see well that for all his purple cloaks I shall not like him, unless he is at last a poor Greek like me. I cannot deny it, O friend, that the vast shadow of the Phenomenal includes thee, also, in its pied and painted immensity,—thee, also, compared with whom all else is shadow. Thou are not Being, as Truth is, as Justice is,—thou art not my soul, but a picture and effigy of that. Thou hast come to me lately, and already thou art seizing thy hat and cloak. Is it not that the soul puts forth friends, as the tree puts forth leaves, and presently, by the germination of new buds, extrudes the old leaf? The law of nature is alternation forevermore. Each electrical state superinduces the opposite. The soul environs itself with friends, that it may enter into a grander self-acquaintance or solitude; and it goes alone, for a season, that it may exalt its conversation or society. This method betrays itself along the whole history of our personal relations. The instinct of affection revives the hope of union with our mates, and the returning sense of insulation recalls us from the chase. Thus every man passes his life in the search after friendship, and if he

should record his true sentiment, he might write a letter like this, to each new candidate for his love:

DEAR FRIEND:—

If I was sure of thee, sure of thy capacity, sure to match my mood with thine, I should never think again of trifles, in relation to thy comings and goings. I am not very wise: my moods are quite attainable: and I respect thy genius: it is to me as yet unfathomed; yet dare I not presume in thee a perfect intelligence of me, and so thou art to me a delicious torment. Thine ever, or never.

8. Yet these uneasy pleasures and fine pains are for curiosity, and not for life. They are not to be indulged. This is to weave cobweb, and not cloth. Our friendships hurry to short and poor conclusions, because we have made them a texture of wine and dreams, instead of the tough fiber of the human heart. The laws of friendship are great, austere, and eternal, of one web with the laws of nature and of morals. But we have aimed at a swift and petty benefit, to suck a sudden sweetness. We snatch at the slowest fruit in the whole garden of God, which many summers and many winters must ripen. We seek our friend not sacredly but with an adulterate passion which would appropriate him to ourselves. In vain. We are armed all over with subtle antagonisms, which, as soon as we meet, begin to play, and translate all poetry into stale

prose. Almost all people descend to meet. All association must be a compromise, and, what is worst, the very flower and aroma of the flower of each of the beautiful natures disappears as they approach each other. What a perpetual disappointment is actual society, even of the virtuous and gifted! After interviews have been compassed with long foresight, we must be tormented presently by baffled blows, by sudden, unseasonable apathies, by epilepsies of wit and of animal spirits, in the heyday of friendship and thought. Our faculties do not play us true, and both parties are relieved by solitude.

9. I ought to be equal to every relation. It makes no difference how many friends I have, and what content I can find in conversing with each, if there be one to whom I am not equal. If I have shrunk unequal from one contest, instantly the joy I find in all the rest becomes mean and cowardly. I should hate myself, if then I made my other friends my asylum.

> The valiant warrior° famoused for fight,
> After a hundred victories, once foiled,
> Is from the book of honor razed quite,
> And all the rest forgot for which he toiled.

10. Our impatience is thus sharply rebuked. Bashfulness and apathy are a tough husk in which a delicate organization is protected

from premature ripening. It would be lost if it knew itself before any of the best souls were yet ripe enough to know and own it. Respect the *naturlangsamkeit*° which hardens the ruby in a million years, and works in duration, in which Alps and Andes come and go as rainbows. The good spirit of our life has no heaven which is the price of rashness. Love, which is the essence of God, is not for levity, but for the total worth of man. Let us not have this childish luxury in our regards; but the austerest worth; let us approach our friend with an audacious trust in the truth of his heart, in the breadth, impossible to be overturned, of his foundations.

11. The attractions of this subject are not to be resisted, and I leave, for the time, all account of subordinate social benefit, to speak of that select and sacred relation which is a kind of absolute, and which even leaves the language of love suspicious and common, so much is this purer, and nothing is so much divine.

12. I do not wish to treat friendships daintily, but with roughest courage. When they are real, they are not glass threads or frostwork, but the solidest thing we know. For now, after so many ages of experience, what do we know of nature, or of ourselves? Not one step has man taken toward the solution of

the problem of his destiny. In one condemnation of folly stand the whole universe of men. But the sweet sincerity of joy and peace, which I draw from this alliance with my brother's soul, is the nut itself whereof all nature and all thought is but the husk and shell. Happy is the house that shelters a friend! It might well be built, like a festal bower or arch, to entertain him a single day. Happier, if he know the solemnity of that relation, and honor its law! It is no idle band, no holiday engagement. He who offers himself a candidate for that covenant comes up, like an Olympian,° to the great games, where the first-born of the world are the competitors. He proposes himself for contests where Time, Want, Danger are in the lists, and he alone is victor who has truth enough in his constitution to preserve the delicacy of his beauty from the wear and tear of all these. The gifts of fortune may be present or absent, but all the hap in that contest depends on intrinsic nobleness, and the contempt of trifles. There are two elements that go to the composition of friendship, each so sovereign, that I can detect no superiority in either, no reason why either should be first named. One is Truth. A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before him, I may think aloud. I am arrived at last in the presence of a man so

real and equal that I may drop even those undermost garments of dissimulation, courtesy, and second thought, which men never put off, and may deal with him with the simplicity and wholeness, with which one chemical atom meets another. Sincerity is the luxury allowed, like diadems and authority, only to the highest rank, *that* being permitted to speak truth, as having none above it to court or conform unto. Every man alone is sincere. At the entrance of a second person, hypocrisy begins. We parry and fend the approach of our fellowman by compliments, by gossip, by amusements, by affairs. We cover up our thought from him under a hundred folds. I knew a man who, under a certain religious frenzy, cast off this drapery, and omitting all compliments and commonplace, spoke to the conscience of every person he encountered, and that with great insight and beauty. At first he was resisted, and all men agreed he was mad. But persisting, as indeed he could not help doing, for some time in this course, he attained to the advantage of bringing every man of his acquaintance into true relations with him. No man would think of speaking falsely with him, or of putting him off with any chat of markets or reading-rooms. But every man was constrained by so much sincerity to the like plain dealing, and what love of nature, what poetry,

what symbol of truth he had, he did certainly show him. But to most of us society shows not its face and eye, but its side and its back. To stand in true relations with men in a false age, is worth a fit of insanity, is it not? We can seldom go erect. Almost every man we meet requires some civility, requires to be humored; he has some fame, some talent, some whim of religion or philanthropy in his head that is not to be questioned, and which spoils all conversation with him. But a friend is a sane man who exercises not my ingenuity, but me. My friend gives me entertainment without requiring me to stoop, or to lisp, or to mask myself. A friend, therefore, is a sort of paradox° in nature. I who alone am, I who see nothing in nature whose existence I can affirm with equal evidence to my own, behold now the semblance of my being in all its height, variety and curiosity, reiterated in a foreign form; so that a friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature.

13. The other element of friendship is Tenderness. We are holden to men by every sort of tie, by blood, by pride, by fear, by hope, by lucre, by lust, by hate, by admiration, by every circumstance and badge and trifle, but we can scarce believe that so much character can subsist in another as to draw us by love. Can another be so blessed, and we so

pure, that we can offer him tenderness? When a man becomes dear to me, I have touched the goal of fortune. I find very little written directly to the heart of this matter in books. And yet I have one text which I cannot choose but remember. My author says,—"I offer myself faintly and bluntly to those whose I effectually am, and tender myself least to him to whom I am the most devoted." I wish that friendship should have feet, as well as eyes and eloquence. It must plant itself on the ground, before it vaults over the moon. I wish it to be a little of a citizen, before it is quite a cherub. We chide the citizen because he makes love a commodity. It is an exchange of gifts, of useful loans; it is good neighborhood; it watches with the sick; it holds the pall at the funeral; and quite loses sight of the delicacies and nobility of the relation. But though we cannot find the god under this disguise of a sutler, yet, on the other hand, we cannot forgive the poet if he spins his thread too fine, and does not substantiate his romance by the municipal virtues of justice, punctuality, fidelity, and pity. I hate the prostitution of the name of friendship to signify modish and worldly alliances. I much prefer the company of plowboys and tin-peddlers, to the silken and perfumed amity which celebrates its days of encounter by a frivolous display, by rides in a

Emerson's House at Concord, 1835–1882

curricle, and dinners at the best taverns. The end of friendship is a commerce the most strict and homely that can be joined; more strict than any of which we have experience. It is for aid and comfort through all the relations and passages of life and death. It is fit for serene days, and graceful gifts, and country rambles, but also for rough roads and hard fare, shipwreck, poverty, and persecution. It keeps company with the sallies of the wit and the trances of religion. We are to dignify to each other the daily needs and offices of man's life, and embellish it by courage, wisdom, and unity. It should never fall into something usual and settled, but should be alert and inventive, and add rhyme and reason to what was drudgery.

14. Friendship may be said to require natures so rare and costly, each so well-tempered, and so happily adapted, and withal so circumstanced, (for even in that particular, a poet says, love demands that the parties be altogether paired,) that its satisfaction can very seldom be assured. It cannot subsist in its perfection, say some of those who are learned in this warm lore of the heart, betwixt more than two. I am not quite so strict in my terms, perhaps because I have never known so high a fellowship as others. I please my imagination more with a circle of godlike men and women

variously related to each other, and between whom subsists a lofty intelligence. But I find this law of *one to one*, peremptory for conversation, which is the practice and consummation of friendship. Do not mix waters too much. The best mix as ill as good and bad. You shall have very useful and cheering discourse at several times with two several men, but let all three of you come together, and you shall not have one new and hearty word. Two may talk and one may hear, but three cannot take part in a conversation of the most sincere and searching sort. In good company there is never such discourse between two, across the table, as takes place when you leave them alone. In good company, the individuals at once merge their egotism into a social soul exactly co-extensive with the several consciousnesses there present. No partialities of friend to friend, no fondnesses of brother to sister, of wife to husband, are there pertinent, but quite otherwise. Only he may then speak who can sail on the common thought of the party, and not poorly limited to his own. Now this convention, which good sense demands, destroys the high freedom of great conversation, which requires an absolute running of two souls into one.

15. No two men but being left alone with each other, enter into simpler relations. Yet it is affinity that determines *which* two shall

converse. Unrelated men give little joy to each other; will never suspect the latent powers of each. We talk sometimes of a great talent for conversation, as if it were a permanent property in some individuals. Conversation is an evanescent relation,—no more. A man is reputed to have thought and eloquence; he cannot, for all that, say a word to his cousin or his uncle. They accuse his silence with as much reason as they would blame the insignificance of a dial in the shade. In the sun it will mark the hour. Among those who enjoy his thought, he will regain his tongue.

16. Friendship requires that rare mean betwixt likeness and unlikeness, that piques each with the presence of power and of consent in the other party. Let me be alone to the end of the world, rather than that my friend should overstep by a word or a look his real sympathy. I am equally balked by antagonism and by compliance. Let him not cease an instant to be himself. The only joy I have in his being mine, is that the *not mine* is *mine*. I hate, where I looked for a manly furtherance, or at least a manly resistance, to find a mush of concession. Better be a nettle in the side of your friend, than his echo. The condition which high friendship demands is ability to do without it. That high office requires great and sublime parts. There must be very two before there can

be very one. Let it be an alliance of two large formidable natures, mutually beheld, mutually feared, before yet they recognize the deep identity which beneath these disparities unites them.

17. He only is fit for this society who is magnanimous; who is sure that greatness and goodness are always economy; who is not swift to intermeddle with his fortunes. Let him not intermeddle with this. Leave to the diamond its ages to grow, nor expect to accelerate the births of the eternal. Friendship demands a religious treatment. We talk of choosing our friends, but friends are self-elected. Reverence is a great part of it. Treat your friend as a spectacle. Of course he has merits that are not yours, and that you cannot honor, if you must needs hold him close to your person. Stand aside; give those merits room; let them mount and expand. Are you the friend of your friend's buttons, or of his thought? To a great heart he will still be a stranger in a thousand particulars, that he may come near in the holiest ground. Leave it to girls and boys to regard a friend as property, and to suck a short and all-confounding pleasure instead of the noblest benefits.

18. Let us buy our entrance to this guild by a long probation. Why should we desecrate noble and beautiful souls by intruding on them?

Why insist on rash personal relations with your friend? Why go to his house, or know his mother and brother and sisters? Why be visited by him at your own? Are these things material to our covenant? Leave this touching and clawing. Let him be to me a spirit. A message, a thought, a sincerity, a glance from him I want, but not news, nor pottage. I can get politics, and chat, and neighborly conveniences, from cheaper companions. Should not the society of my friend be to me poetic, pure, universal, and great as nature itself? Ought I to feel that our tie is profane in comparison with yonder bar of cloud that sleeps on the horizon, or that clump of waving grass that divides the brook? Let us not vilify but raise it to that standard. That great defying eye, that scornful beauty of his mien and action, do not pique yourself on reducing, but rather fortify and enhance. Worship his superiorities; wish him not less by a thought, but hoard and tell them all. Guard him as thy counterpart. Let him be to thee forever a sort of beautiful enemy, untamable, devoutly revered, and not a trivial conveniency to be soon outgrown and cast aside. The hues of the opal, the light of the diamond, are not to be seen, if the eye is too near. To my friend I write a letter, and from him I receive a letter. That seems to you a little. It suffices me. It is a spiritual gift worthy of him

to give and of me to receive. It profanes nobody. In these warm lines the heart will trust itself, as it will not to the tongue, and pour out the prophecy of a godlier existence than all the annals of heroism have yet made good.

19. Respect so far the holy laws of this fellowship as not to prejudice its perfect flower by your impatience for its opening. We must be our own before we can be another's. There is at least this satisfaction in crime, according to the Latin proverb: you can speak to your accomplice on even terms. *Crimen quos inquinat, æquat.* To those whom we admire and love, at first we cannot. Yet the least defect of self-possession vitiates, in my judgment, the entire relation. There can never be deep peace between two spirits, never mutual respect, until, in their dialogue, each stands for the whole world.

20. What is so great as friendship, let us carry with what grandeur of spirit we can. Let us be silent,—so we may hear the whisper of the gods. Let us not interfere. Who set you to cast about what you should say to the select souls, or how to say anything to such? No matter how ingenious, no matter how graceful and bland. There are innumerable degrees of folly and wisdom, and for you to say aught is to be frivolous. Wait, and thy heart shall speak. Wait until the necessary and everlasting

overpowers you, until day and night avail themselves of your lips. The only reward of virtue, is virtue; the only way to have a friend is to be one. You shall not come nearer a man by getting into his house. If unlike, his soul only flees the faster from you, and you shall catch never a true glance of his eye. We see the noble afar off, and they repel us; why should we intrude? Late,—very late,—we perceive that no arrangements, no introductions, no consuetudes or habits of society, would be of any avail to establish us in such relations with them as we desire,—but solely the uprise of nature in us to the same degree it is in them; then shall we meet as water with water; and if we should not meet them then, we shall not want them, for we are already they. In the last analysis, love is only the reflection of a man's own worthiness from other men. Men have sometimes exchanged names with their friends, as if they would signify that in their friend each loved his own soul.

21. The higher the style we demand of friendship, of course the less easy to establish it with flesh and blood. We walk alone in the world. Friends, such as we desire, are dreams and fables. But a sublime hope cheers ever the faithful heart, that elsewhere, in other regions of the universal power, souls are now acting, enduring and daring, which can love

us, and which we can love. We may congratulate ourselves that the period of nonage, of follies, of blunders, and of shame, is passed in solitude, and when we are finished men, we shall grasp heroic hands in heroic hands. Only be admonished by what you already see, not to strike leagues of friendship with cheap persons, where no friendship can be. Our impatience betrays us into rash and foolish alliances which no God attends. By persisting in your path, though you forfeit the little you gain the great. You demonstrate yourself, so as to put yourself out of the reach of false relations, and you draw to you the first-born of the world, those rare pilgrims whereof only one or two wander in nature at once, and before whom the vulgar great show as spectres and shadows merely.

22. It is foolish to be afraid of making our ties too spiritual, as if so we could lose any genuine love. Whatever correction of our popular views we make from insight, nature will be sure to bear us out in, and though it seem to rob us of some joy, will repay us with a greater. Let us feel, if we will, the absolute insulation of man. We are sure that we have all in us. We go to Europe, or we pursue persons, or we read books, in the instinctive faith that these will call it out and reveal us to ourselves. Beggars all. The persons are such as

we; the Europe, an old faded garment of dead persons; the books, their ghosts. Let us drop this idolatry. Let us give over this mendicancy. Let us even bid our dearest friends farewell, and defy them, saying, "Who are you? Unhand me. I will be dependent no more." Ah! seest thou not, O brother, that thus we part only to meet again on a higher platform, and only be more each other's, because we are more our own? A friend is Janus-faced°: he looks to the past and the future. He is the child of all my foregoing hours, the prophet of those to come, and the harbinger of a greater friend.

23. I do then with my friends as I do with my books. I would have them where I can find them, but I seldom use them. We must have society on our own terms, and admit or exclude it on the slightest cause. I cannot afford to speak much with my friend. If he is great, he makes me so great that I cannot descend to converse. In the great days, presentiments hover before me, far before me in the firmament. I ought then to dedicate myself to them. I go in that I may seize them, I go out that I may seize them. I fear only that I may lose them receding into the sky in which now they are only a patch of brighter light. Then, though I prize my friends, I cannot afford to talk with them and study their visions, lest I lose my own. It would indeed give me a certain

household joy to quit this lofty seeking, this spiritual astronomy, or search of stars, and come down to warm sympathies with you; but then I know well I shall mourn always the vanishing of my mighty gods. It is true, next week I shall have languid moods, when I can well afford to occupy myself with foreign objects; then I shall regret the lost literature of your mind, and wish you were by my side again. But if you come, perhaps you will fill my mind only with new visions, not with yourself but with your lustres, and I shall not be able any more than now to converse with you. So I will owe to my friends this evanescent intercourse. I will receive from them, not what they have, but what they are. They shall give me that which properly they cannot give, but which emanates from them. But they shall not hold me by any relations less subtile and pure. We will meet as though we met not, and part as though we parted not.

24. It has seemed to me lately more possible than I knew, to carry a friendship greatly, on one side, without due correspondence on the other. Why should I cumber myself with regrets that the receiver is not capacious? It never troubles the sun that some of his rays fall wide and vain into ungrateful space, and only a small part on the reflecting planet. Let your greatness educate the crude and cold com-

panion. If he is unequal, he will presently pass away; but thou art enlarged by thy own shining, and, no longer a mate for frogs and worms, dost soar and burn with the gods of the empyrean.° It is thought a disgrace to love unrequited. But the great will see that true love cannot be unrequited. True love transcends the unworthy object, and dwells and broods on the eternal, and when the poor interposed mask crumbles, it is not sad, but feels rid of so much earth, and feels its independency the surer. Yet these things may hardly be said without a sort of treachery to the relation. The essence of friendship is entireness, a total magnanimity and trust. It must not surmise or provide for infirmity. It treats its object as a god, that it may deify both.

CHARACTER

1. I HAVE read that those who listened to Lord Chatham° felt that there was something finer in the man than anything which he said. It has been complained of our brilliant English historian° of the French Revolution, that when he has told all his facts about Mirabeau,° they do not justify his estimate of his genius. The Gracchi,° Agis,° Cleomenes,° and others of Plutarch's° heroes, do not in the record of facts equal their own fame. Sir Philip Sidney, the Earl of Essex,° Sir Walter Raleigh,° are men of great figure, and of few deeds. We cannot find the smallest part of the personal weight of Washington in the narrative of his exploits. The authority of the name of Schiller° is too great for his books. This inequality of the reputation to the works or the anecdotes, is not accounted for by saying that the reverberation is longer than the thunder-clap; but somewhat resided in these men which begot an expectation that outran all their performance. The largest part of their power was latent. This is that which we call Character,—a reserved force which acts directly by presence, and without means. It is conceived of

as a certain undemonstrable force, a Familiar or Genius,° by whose impulses the man is guided, but whose counsels he cannot impart; which is company for him, so that such men are often solitary, or if they chance to be social, do not need society, but can entertain themselves very well alone. The purest literary talent appears at one time great, at another time small, but character is of a stellar and undiminishable greatness. What others effect by talent or by eloquence, this man accomplishes by some magnetism. "Half his strength he put not forth." His victories are by demonstration of superiority, and not by crossing of bayonets. He conquers, because his arrival alters the face of affairs. "'O Iole°! how did you know that Hercules° was a god?' 'Because,' answered Iole, 'I was content the moment my eyes fell on him. When I beheld Theseus,° I desired that I might see him offer battle, or at least guide his horses in the chariot-race; but Hercules did not wait for a contest; he conquered whether he stood, or walked, or sat, or whatever thing he did.'" Man, ordinarily a pendant to events, only half attached, and that awkwardly, to the world he lives in, in these examples appears to share the life of things, and to be an expression of the same laws which control the tides and the sun, numbers and quantities.

2. But to use a more modest illustration, and nearer home, I observe, that in our political elections, where this element, if it appears at all, can only occur in its coarsest form, we sufficiently understand its incomparable rate. The people know that they need in their representative much more than talent, namely, the power to make his talent trusted. They cannot come at their ends by sending to Congress a learned, acute, and fluent speaker, if he be not one, who, before he was appointed by the people to represent them, was appointed by Almighty God to stand for a fact,—invincibly persuaded of that fact in himself,—so that the most confident and the most violent persons learn that here is resistance on which both impudence and terror are wasted, namely, faith in a fact. The men who carry their points do not need to inquire of their constituents what they should say, but are themselves the country which they represent: nowhere are its emotions or opinions so instant and true as in them; nowhere so pure from a selfish infusion. The constituency at home hearkens to their words, watches the color of their cheek, and therein, as in a glass, dresses its own. Our public assemblies are pretty good tests of manly force. Our frank countrymen of the west and south have a taste for character, and like to know whether the New Englander is a

substantial man, or whether the hand can pass through him.

3. The same motive force appears in trade. There are geniuses in trade, as well as in war, or the state, or letters; and the reason why this or that man is fortunate, is not to be told. It lies in the man: that is all anybody can tell you about it. See him, and you will know as easily why he succeeds, as, if you saw Napoleon,° you would comprehend his fortune. In the new objects we recognize the old game, the habit of fronting the fact, and not dealing with it at second hand, through the perceptions of somebody else. Nature seems to authorize trade, as soon as you see the natural merchant, who appears not so much a private agent, as her factor and Minister of Commerce. His natural probity combines with his insight into the fabric of society, to put him above tricks, and he communicates to all his own faith, that contracts are of no private interpretation. The habit of his mind is a reference to standards of natural equity and public advantage; and he inspires respect, and the wish to deal with him, both for the quiet spirit of honor which attends him, and for the intellectual pastime which the spectacle of so much ability affords. This immensely stretched trade, which makes the capes of the Southern Ocean his wharves, and the Atlantic Sea his

familiar port, centres in his brain only; and nobody in the universe can make his place good. In his parlor, I see very well that he has been at hard work this morning, with that knitted brow, and that settled humor, which all his desire to be courteous cannot shake off. I see plainly how many firm acts have been done; how many valiant *noes* have this day been spoken, when others would have uttered ruinous *yeas*. I see, with the pride of art, and skill of masterly arithmetic and power of remote combination, the consciousness of being an agent and playfellow of the original laws of the world. He too believes that none can supply him, and that a man must be born to trade, or he cannot learn it.

4. This virtue draws the mind more, when it appears in action to ends not so mixed. It works with most energy in the smallest companies and in private relations. In all cases, it is an extraordinary and incomputable agent. The excess of physical strength is paralyzed by it. Higher natures overpower lower ones by affecting them with a certain sleep. The faculties are locked up, and offer no resistance. Perhaps that is the universal law. When the high cannot bring up the low to itself, it benumbs it, as man charms down the resistance of the lower animals. Men exert on each other a similar occult power. How often has the in-

fluence of a true master realized all the tales of magic! A river of command seemed to run down from his eyes into all those who beheld him, a torrent of strong sad light, like an Ohio or Danube, which pervaded them with his thoughts, and colored all events with the hue of his mind. "What means did you employ?" was the question asked of the wife of Concini,° in regard to her treatment of Mary of Medici°; and the answer was, "Only that influence which every strong mind has over a weak one." Cannot Cæsar° in irons shuffle off the irons, and transfer them to the person of Hippo or Thraso the turnkey? Is an iron handcuff so immutable a bond? Suppose a slaver on the coast of Guinea should take on board a gang of negroes, which should contain persons of the stamp of Toussaint L'Ouverture°: or, let us fancy, under these swarthy masks he has a gang of Washingtons in chains. When they arrive at Cuba, will the relative order of the ship's company be the same? Is there nothing but rope and iron? Is there no love, no reverence? Is there never a glimpse of right in a poor slave-captain's mind; and cannot these be supposed available to break, or elude, or in any manner overmatch the tension of an inch or two of iron ring?

5. This is a natural power, the light and heat, and all nature coöperates with it. The

reason why we feel one man's presence, and do not feel another's, is as simple as gravity. Truth is the summit of being; justice is the application of it to affairs. All individual natures stand in a scale, according to the purity of this element in them. The will of the pure runs down from them into other natures, as water runs down from a higher into a lower vessel. This natural force is no more to be withstood, than any other natural force. We can drive a stone upward for a moment into the air, but it is yet true that all stones will forever fall; and whatever instances can be quoted of unpunished theft, or of a lie which somebody credited, justice must prevail, and it is the privilege of truth to make itself believed. Character is this moral order seen through the medium of an individual nature. An individual is an encloser. Time and space, liberty and necessity, truth and thought, are left at large no longer. Now, the universe is a close or pound. All things exist in the man tinged with the manners of his soul. With what quality is in him, he infuses all nature that he can reach; nor does he tend to lose himself in vastness, but, at how long a curve soever, all his regards return into his own good at last. He animates all he can, and he sees only what he animates. He encloses the world, as the patriot does his country, as a

material basis for his character, and a theater for action. A healthy soul stands united with the Just and the True, as the magnet arranges itself with the pole, so that he stands to all beholders like a transparent object between them and the sun, and whoso journeys toward the sun, journeys toward that person. He is thus the medium of the highest influence to all who are not on the same level. Thus, men of character are the conscience of the society to which they belong.

6. The natural measure of this power is the resistance of circumstances. Impure men consider life as it is reflected in opinions, events, and persons. They cannot see the action, until it is done. Yet its moral element pre-existed in the actor, and its quality as right or wrong, it was easy to predict. Everything in nature is bipolar,° or has a positive and negative pole. There is a male and a female, a spirit and a fact, a north and a south. Spirit is the positive, the event is the negative. Will is the north, action the south pole. Character may be ranked as having its natural place in the north. It shares the magnetic currents of the system. The feeble souls are drawn to the south or negative pole. They look at the profit or hurt of the action. They never behold a principle until it is lodged in a person. They do not wish to be lovely, but to be loved. Men

of character like to hear of their faults: the other class do not like to hear of faults; they worship events; secure to them a fact, a connection, a certain chain of circumstances, and they will ask no more. The hero sees that the event is ancillary: it must follow *him*. A given order of events has no power to secure to him the satisfaction which the imagination attaches to it; the soul of goodness escapes from any set of circumstances, whilst prosperity belongs to a certain mind, and will introduce that power and victory which is its natural fruit, into any order of events. No change of circumstances can repair a defect of character. We boast our emancipation from many superstitions; but if we have broken any idols, it is through a transfer of the idolatry. What have I gained, that I no longer immolate a bull to Jove, or to Neptune,° or a mouse to Hecate°; that I do not tremble before the Eumenides,° or the Catholic Purgatory,° or the Calvinistic Judgment-day,° —if I quake at opinion, the public opinion, as we call it; or at the threat of assault, or contumely, or bad neighbors, or poverty, or mutilation, or at the rumor of revolution, or of murder? If I quake, what matters it what I quake at? Our proper vice takes form in one or another shape, according to the sex, age, or temperament of the person, and, if we are capable of fear, will readily find terrors. The

covetousness or the malignity which saddens me, when I ascribe it to society, is my own. I am always environed by myself. On the other part, rectitude is a perpetual victory, celebrated not by cries of joy, but by serenity, which is joy fixed or habitual. It is disgraceful to fly to events for confirmation of our truth and worth. The capitalist does not run every hour to the broker, to coin his advantages into current money of the realm; he is satisfied to read in the quotations of the market, that his stocks have risen. The same transport which the occurrence of the best events in the best order would occasion me, I must learn to taste purer in the perception that my position is every hour meliorated, and does already command those events I desire. That exultation is only to be checked by the foresight of an order of things so excellent, as to throw all our prosperities into the deepest shade.

7. The face which character wears to me is self-sufficingness. I revere the person who is riches; so that I cannot think of him as alone, or poor, or exiled, or unhappy, or a client, but as perpetual patron, benefactor, and beatified man. Character is centrality, the impossibility of being displaced or overset. A man should give us a sense of mass. Society is frivolous, and shreds its day into scraps, its conversation into ceremonies and escapes. But if I go to

see an ingenious man, I shall think myself poorly entertained if he give me nimble pieces of benevolence and etiquette; rather he shall stand stoutly in his place, and let me apprehend, if it were only his resistance; know that I have encountered a new and positive quality; great refreshment for both of us. It is much, that he does not accept the conventional opinions and practices. That non-conformity will remain a goad and remembrancer, and every inquirer will have to dispose of him, in the first place. There is nothing real or useful that is not a seat of war. Our houses ring with laughter, and personal and critical gossip, but it helps little. But the uncivil, unavailable man, who is a problem and a threat to society, whom it cannot let pass in silence, but must either worship or hate,—and to whom all parties feel related, both the leaders of opinion, and the obscure and eccentric,—he helps; he puts America and Europe in the wrong, and destroys the skepticism which says, "man is a doll, let us eat and drink, 'tis the best we can do," by illuminating the untried and unknown. Acquiescence in the establishment, and appeal to the public, indicate infirm faith, heads which are not clear, and which must see a house built, before they can comprehend the plan of it. The wise man not only leaves out of his thought the many, but leaves out the few. Fountains, the self-

moved, the absorbed, the commander because he is commanded, the assured, the primary,—they are good; for these announce the instant presence of supreme power.

8. Our action should rest mathematically on our substance. In nature, there are no false valuations. A pound of water in the ocean-tempest has no more gravity than in a mid-summer pond. All things work exactly according to their quality, and according to their quantity; attempt nothing they cannot do, except man only. He has pretension: he wishes and attempts things beyond his force. I read in a book of English memoirs, "Mr. Fox° (afterward Lord Holland) said, he must have the Treasury; he had served up to it, and would have it."

9. Xenophon° and his Ten Thousand were quite equal to what they attempted, and did it; so equal, that it was not suspected to be a grand and inimitable exploit. Yet there stands that fact unrepeated, a high water-mark in military history. Many have attempted it since, and not been equal to it. It is only on reality, that any power of action can be based. No institution will be better than the institutor. I knew an amiable and accomplished person who undertook a practical reform, yet I was never able to find in him the enterprise of love he took in hand. He adopted it by ear and by the

understanding from the books he had been reading. All his action was tentative, a piece of the city carried out into the fields, and was the city still, and no new fact, and could not inspire enthusiasm. Had there been something latent in the man, a terrible undemonstrated genius agitating and embarrassing his demeanor, we had watched for its advent. It is not enough that the intellect should see the evils, and their remedy. We shall still postpone our existence, nor take the ground to which we are entitled, while it is only a thought, and not a spirit that incites us. We have not yet served up to it.

10. These are properties of life, and another trait is the notice of incessant growth. Men should be intelligent and earnest. They must also make us feel, that they have a controlling, happy future, opening before them, whose early twilights already kindle in the passing hour. The hero is misconceived and misreported: he cannot therefore wait to unravel any man's blunders: he is again on his road, adding new powers and honors to his domain, and new claims on your heart, which will bankrupt you, if you have loitered about the old things, and have not kept your relation to him, by adding to your wealth. New actions are the only apologies and explanations of old ones, which the noble can bear to offer or to

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receive. If your friend has displeased you, you shall not sit down to consider it, for he has already lost all memory of the passage, and has doubled his power to serve you, and, ere you can rise up again, will burden you with blessings.

11. We have no pleasure in thinking of a benevolence that is only measured by its works. Love is inexhaustible, and if its estate is wasted, its granary emptied, still cheers and enriches, and the man, though he sleep, seems to purify the air, and his house to adorn the landscape and strengthen the laws. People always recognize this difference. We know who is benevolent, by quite other means than the amount of subscription to soup-societies. It is only low merits that can be enumerated. Fear, when your friends say to you what you have done well, and say it through; but when they stand with uncertain timid looks of respect and half-dislike, and must suspend their judgment for years to come, you may begin to hope. Those who live to the future must always appear selfish to those who live to the present. Therefore it was droll in the good Riemer,° who has written memoirs of Goethe,° to make out a list of his donations and good deeds, as, so many hundred thalers given to Stilling,° to Hegel,° to Tischbein°: a lucrative place found for Professor Voss,° a post under the Grand Duke for

Herder,° a pension for Meyer,° two professors recommended to foreign universities, &c., &c. The longest list of specifications of benefit would look very short. A man is a poor creature, if he is to be measured so. For, all these, of course, are exceptions; and the rule and hodiernal life of a good man is benefaction. The true charity of Goethe is to be inferred from the account he gave Dr. Eckermann,° of the way in which he had spent his fortune. "Each bon-mot of mine has cost a purse of gold. Half a million of my own money, the fortune I inherited, my salary, and the large income derived from my writings for fifty years back, have been expended to instruct me in what I now know. I have besides seen," &c.

12. I own it is but poor chat and gossip to go to enumerate traits of this simple and rapid power, and we are painting the lightning with charcoal; but in these long nights and vacations, I like to console myself so. Nothing but itself can copy it. A word warm from the heart enriches me. I surrender at discretion. How death-cold is literary genius before this fire of life! These are the touches that reanimate my heavy soul, and give it eyes to pierce the dark of nature. I find, where I thought myself poor, there was I most rich. Thence comes a new intellectual exaltation, to be again rebuked by some new exhibition of character. Strange al-

ternation of attraction and repulsion! Character repudiates intellect, yet excites it; and character passes into thought, is published so, and then is ashamed before new flashes of moral worth.

13. Character is nature in the highest form. It is of no use to ape it, or to contend with it. Somewhat is possible of resistance, and of persistence, and of creation, to this power, which will foil all emulation.

14. This masterpiece is best where no hands but nature's have been laid on it. Care is taken that the greatly destined shall slip up into life in the shade, with no thousand-eyed Athens to watch and blazon every new thought, every blushing emotion of young genius. Two persons lately—very young children of the most high God—have given me occasion for thought. When I explored the source of their sanctity, and charm for the imagination, it seemed as if each answered, "From my non-conformity: I never listened to your people's law, or to what they call their gospel, and wasted my time. I was content with the simple rural poverty of my own; hence this sweetness; my work never reminds you of that—is pure of that." And nature advertises me in such persons, that, in democratic America, she will not be democratized. How cloistered and constitutionally sequestered from the market and from

scandal! It was only this morning, that I sent away some wild flowers of these wood-gods. They are a relief from literature,—these fresh draughts from the sources of thought and sentiment; as we read, in an age of polish and criticism, the first lines of written prose and verse of a nation. How captivating is their devotion to their favorite books, whether Æschylus,° Dante,° Shakespeare, or Scott, as feeling that they have a stake in that book: who touches that, touches them; and especially the total solitude of the critic, the Patmos° of thought from which he writes, in unconsciousness of any eyes that shall ever read this writing. Could they dream on still, as angels, and not wake to comparisons, and to be flattered! Yet some natures are too good to be spoiled by praise, and wherever the vein of thought reaches down into the profound, there is no danger from vanity. Solemn friends will warn them of the danger of the head's being turned by the flourish of trumpets, but they can afford to smile. I remember the indignation of an eloquent Methodist at the kind admonitions of a Doctor of Divinity,—"My friend, a man can neither be praised nor insulted." But forgive the counsels; they are very natural. I remember the thought which occurred to me when some ingenious and spiritual foreigners came to America, was, "Have you been victimized

in being brought hither?"—or, prior to that, answer me this, "Are you victimizable?"

15. As I have said, nature keeps these sovereignties in her own hands, and however pertly our sermons and disciplines would divide some share of credit, and teach that the laws fashion the citizen, she goes her own gait, and puts the wisest in the wrong. She makes very light of gospels and prophets, as one who has a great many more to produce, and no excess of time to spare on any one. There is a class of men, individuals of which appear at long intervals, so eminently endowed with insight and virtue, that they have been unanimously saluted as *divine,* and who seem to be an accumulation of that power we consider. Divine persons are character born, or, to borrow a phrase from Napoleon, they are victory organized. They are usually received with ill-will, because they are new, and because they set a bound to the exaggeration that has been made of the personality of the last divine person. Nature never rhymes her children, nor makes two men alike. When we see a great man, we fancy a resemblance to some historical person, and predict the sequel of his character and fortune, a result which he is sure to disappoint. None will ever solve the problem of his character according to our prejudice, but only in his own high unprecedented way. Character wants room; must

not be crowded on by persons, nor be judged from glimpses got in the press of affairs or on few occasions. It needs perspective, as a great building. It may not, probably does not, form relations rapidly; and we should not require rash explanation, either on the popular ethics, or on our own, of its action.

16. I look on Sculpture as history. I do not think the Apollo° and the Jove° impossible in flesh and blood. Every trait which the artist recorded in stone, he had seen in life, and better than his copy. We have seen many counterfeits, but we are born believers in great men. How easily we read in old books, when men were few, of the smallest action of the patriarchs. We require that a man should be so large and columnar in the landscape, that it should deserve to be recorded, that he arose, and girded up his loins, and departed to such a place. The most credible pictures are those of majestic men who prevailed at their entrance, and convinced the senses; as happened to the eastern magian who was sent to test the merits of Zertusht or Zoroaster.° When the Yunani° sage arrived at Balkh,° the Persians tell us, Gushtasp° appointed a day on which the Mobeds° of every country should assemble, and a golden chair was placed for the Yunani sage. Then the beloved of Yezdam,° the prophet Zertusht, advanced into the midst of

the assembly. The Yunani sage, on seeing that chief, said, "This form and this gait cannot lie, and nothing but truth can proceed from them." Plato° said, it was impossible not to believe in the children of the gods, "though they should speak without probable or necessary arguments." I should think myself very unhappy in my associates, if I could not credit the best things in history. "John Bradshaw,°" says Milton,° "appears like a consul, from whom the fasces are not to depart with the year; so that not on the tribunal only, but throughout his life, you would regard him as sitting in judgment upon kings." I find it more creditable, since it is anterior information, that one man should *know heaven,* as the Chinese say, than that so many men should know the world. "The virtuous prince confronts the gods, without any misgiving. He waits a hundred ages till a sage comes, and does not doubt. He who confronts the gods, without any misgiving, knows heaven; he who waits a hundred ages until a sage comes, without doubting, knows men. Hence the virtuous prince moves, and for ages shows empire the way." But there is no need to seek remote examples. He is a dull observer whose experience has not taught him the reality and force of magic, as well as of chemistry. The coldest precision cannot go abroad without encounter-

ing inexplicable influences. One man fastens an eye on him, and the graves of the memory render up their dead; the secrets that make him wretched either to keep or to betray, must be yielded; another, and he cannot speak, and the bones of his body seem to lose their cartilages; the entrance of a friend adds grace, boldness, and eloquence to him; and there are persons, he cannot choose but remember, who gave a transcendent expansion to his thought, and kindled another life in his bosom.

17. What is so excellent as strict relations of amity, when they spring from this deep root? The sufficient reply to the skeptic, who doubts the power and the furniture of man, is in that possibility of joyful intercourse with persons, which makes the faith and practice of all reasonable men. I know nothing which life has to offer so satisfying as the profound good understanding, which can subsist, after much exchange of good offices, between two virtuous men, each of whom is sure of himself, and sure of his friend. It is a happiness which postpones all other gratifications, and makes politics, and commerce, and churches, cheap. For, when men shall meet as they ought, each a benefactor, a shower of stars, clothed with thoughts, with deeds, with accomplishments, it should be the festival of nature which all things announce. Of such friendship, love in the sexes

is the first symbol, as all other things are symbols of love. Those relations to the best men, which, at one time, we reckoned the romances of youth, become, in the progress of the character, the most solid enjoyment.

18. If it were possible to live in right relations with men!—if we could abstain from asking anything of them, from asking their praise, or help, or pity, and content us with compelling them through the virtue of the eldest laws! Could we not deal with a few persons,—with one person,—after the unwritten statutes, and make an experiment of their efficacy? Could we not pay our friend the compliment of truth, of silence, of forbearing? Need we be so eager to seek him? If we are related, we shall meet. It was a tradition of the ancient world that no metamorphosis could hide a god from a god; and there is a Greek verse which runs,

> "The Gods are to each other not unknown."

Friends also follow the laws of divine necessity; they gravitate to each other, and cannot otherwise:

> When each the other shall avoid,
> Shall each by each be most enjoyed.

Their relation is not made, but allowed. The

gods must seat themselves without seneschal in our Olympus, and as they can install themselves by seniority divine. Society is spoiled, if pains are taken, if the associates are brought a mile to meet. And if it be not society, it is a mischievous, low, degrading jangle, though made up of the best. All the greatness of each is kept back, and every foible in painful activity, as if the Olympians should meet to exchange snuff-boxes.

19. Life goes headlong. We chase some flying scheme, or we are hunted by some fear or command behind us. But if suddenly we encounter a friend, we pause; our heat and hurry look foolish enough; now pause, now possession, is required, and the power to swell the moment from the resources of the heart. The moment is all, in all noble relations.

20. A divine person is the prophecy of the mind; a friend is the hope of the heart. Our beatitude waits for the fulfillment of these two in one. The ages are opening this moral force. All force is the shadow or symbol of that. Poetry is joyful and strong, as it draws its inspiration thence. Men write their names on the world, as they are filled with this. History has been mean; our nations have been mobs; we have never seen a man: that divine form we do not yet know, but only the dream and prophecy of such: we do not know the ma-

jestic manners which belongs to him, which appease and exalt the beholder. We shall one day see that the most private is the most public energy, that quality atones for quantity, and grandeur of character acts in the dark, and succors them who never saw it. What greatness has yet appeared, is beginnings and encouragements to us in this direction. The history of those gods and saints which the world has written, and then worshiped, are documents of character. The ages have exulted in the manners of a youth who owed nothing to fortune, and who was hanged at the Tyburn° of his nation, who, by the pure quality of his nature, shed an epic splendor around the facts of his death, which has transfigured every particular into an universal symbol for the eyes of mankind. This great defeat is hitherto our highest fact. But the mind requires a victory to the senses, a force of character which will convert judge, jury, soldier, and king; which will rule animal and mineral virtues, and blend with the courses of sap, of rivers, of winds, of stars, and of moral agents.

21. If we cannot attain at a bound to these grandeurs, at least, let us do them homage. In society, high advantages are set down to the possessor, as disadvantages. It requires the more wariness in our private estimates. I do not forgive in my friends the failure to know

a fine character, and to entertain it with thankful hospitality. When, at last, that which we have always longed for, is arrived, and shines on us with glad rays out of that far celestial land, then to be coarse, then to be critical, and treat such a visitant with the jabber and suspicion of the streets, argues a vulgarity that seems to shut the doors of heaven. This is confusion, this the right insanity, when the soul no longer knows its own, nor where its allegiance, its religion, are due. Is there any religion but this, to know, that, wherever in the wide desert of being, the holy sentiment we cherish has opened into a flower, it blooms for me? If none sees it, I see it; I am aware, if I alone, of the greatness of the fact. Whilst it blooms, I will keep sabbath or holy time, and suspend my gloom, and my folly and jokes. Nature is indulged by the presence of this guest. There are many eyes that can detect and honor the prudent and household virtues; there are many that can discern Genius on his starry track, though the mob is incapable; but when that love which is all-suffering, all-abstaining, all-aspiring, which has vowed to itself, that it will be a wretch and also a fool in this world, sooner than soil its white hands by any compliances, comes into our streets and houses,—only the pure and aspiring can know its face, and the only compliment they can pay it, is to own it.

SELF-RELIANCE

"Man is his own star, and the soul that can
Render an honest and a perfect man,
Command all light, all influence, all fate,
Nothing to him falls early or too late.
Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still."
Epilogue to Beaumont and Fletcher's *Honest Man's Fortune.*

1. I READ the other day some verses written by an eminent painter which were original and not conventional. The soul always hears an admonition in such lines, let the subject be what it may. The sentiment they instill is of more value than any thought they may contain. To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,—that is genius. Speak your latent conviction, and it shall be the universal sense; for the inmost in due time becomes the outmost,—and our first thought is rendered back to us by the trumpets of the Last Judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato,° and Milton° is, that they set at naught books and traditions, and spoke not what men, but what they thought. A man should learn to

detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts: they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-humored inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else, to-morrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another.

2. There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better, for worse, as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. Not for nothing one face, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him,

and another none. This sculpture in the memory is not without pre-established harmony. The eye was placed where one ray should fall, that it might testify of that particular ray. We but half express ourselves, and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents. It may be safely trusted as proportionate and of good issues, so it be faithfully imparted, but God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise, shall give him no peace. It is a deliverance which does not deliver. In the attempt his genius deserts him; no muse befriends; no invention, no hope.

3. Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors and invalids in a protected corner, not cowards fleeing before a

revolution, but guides, redeemers, and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort, and advancing on Chaos° and the the Dark.

4. What pretty oracles nature yields us on this text in the face and behavior of children, babes, and even brutes! That divided and rebel mind, that distrust of a sentiment because our arithmetic has computed the strength and means opposed to our purpose, these° have not. Their mind being whole, their eye is as yet unconquered, and when we look in their faces, we are disconcerted. Infancy conforms to nobody: all conform to it, so that one babe commonly makes four or five° out of the adults who prattle and play to it. So God has armed youth and puberty and manhood no less with its own piquancy and charm, and made it enviable and gracious and its claims not to be put by, if it will stand by itself. Do not think the youth has no force, because he cannot speak to you and me. Hark! in the next room his voice is sufficiently clear and emphatic. It seems he knows how to speak to his contemporaries. Bashful or bold then, he will know how to make us seniors very unnecessary.

5. The nonchalance of boys who are sure of a dinner, and would disdain as much as a lord to do or say aught to conciliate one, is the healthy attitude of human nature. A boy is in the parlor what the pit° is in the play-

house; independent, irresponsible, looking out from his corner on such people and facts as pass by, he tries and sentences them on their merits, in the swift, summary way of boys, as good, bad, interesting, silly, eloquent, troublesome. He cumbers himself never about consequences, about interests; he gives an independent, genuine verdict. You must court him; he does not court you. But the man is, as it were, clapped into jail by his consciousness. As soon as he has once acted or spoken with eclat,° he is a committed person, watched by the sympathy or the hatred of hundreds, whose affections must now enter into his account. There is no Lethe° for this. Ah, that he could pass again into his neutrality! Who can thus lose all pledges, and having observed, observe again from the same unaffected, unbiased, unbribable, unaffrighted innocence, must always be formidable. He would utter opinions on all passing affairs, which being seen to be not private, but necessary, would sink like darts into the ear of men, and put them in fear.

6. These are the voices which we hear in solitude, but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world. Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each share-

holder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

7. Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness.° Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser who was wont to importune me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within? my friend suggested—"But these impulses may be from below, not from above." I replied, "They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil's child, I will live then from the Devil." No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my constitution, the only wrong what is against it. A man is to carry himself in the presence of all opposition, as if every thing were titular and ephemeral but he. I am ashamed to think how easily

we capitulate to badges and names, to large societies and dead institutions. Every decent and well-spoken individual affects and sways me more than is right. I ought to go upright and vital, and speak the rude truth in all ways. If malice and vanity wear the coat of philanthropy, shall that pass? If an angry bigot assumes this bountiful cause of Abolition, and comes to me with his last news from Barbadoes,° why should I not say to him, "Go love thy infant; love thy wood-chopper; be good-natured and modest; have that grace; and never varnish your hard, uncharitable ambition with this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off. Thy love afar is spite at home." Rough and graceless would be such greeting, but truth is handsomer than the affectation of love. Your goodness must have some edge to it,—else it is none. The doctrine of hatred must be preached as the counteraction of the doctrine of love when that pules and whines. I shun father and mother and wife and brother, when my genius calls me. I would write on the lintels of the door-post, *Whim*.° I hope it is somewhat better than whim at last, but we cannot spend the day in explanation. Expect me not to show cause why I seek or why I exclude company. Then, again, do not tell me, as a good man did to-day, of my obligation to put all poor

men in good situations. Are they *my* poor? I tell thee, thou foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the dollar, the dime, the cent I give to such men as do not belong to me and to whom I do not belong. There is a class of persons to whom by all spiritual affinity I am bought and sold; for them I will go to prison, if need be; but your miscellaneous popular charities; the education at college of fools; the building of meeting-houses to the vain end to which many now stand; alms to sots; and the thousandfold Relief Societies;—though I confess with shame I sometimes succumb and give the dollar, it is a wicked dollar which by and by I shall have the manhood to withhold.

8. Virtues are, in the popular estimate, rather the exception than the rule. There is the man *and* his virtues. Men do what is called a good action, as some piece of courage or charity, much as they would pay a fine in expiation of daily non-appearance on parade. Their works are done as an apology or extenuation of their living in the world,—as invalids and the insane pay a high board. Their virtues are penances. I do not wish to expiate, but to live. My life is for itself and not for a spectacle. I much prefer that it should be of a lower strain, so it be genuine and equal, than that it should be glittering and unsteady. I wish it to be sound and sweet, and not to need diet and

bleeding. I ask primary evidence that you are a man, and refuse this appeal from the man to his actions. I know that for myself it makes no difference whether I do or forbear those actions which are reckoned excellent. I cannot consent to pay for a privilege where I have intrinsic right. Few and mean as my gifts may be, I actually am, and do not need for my own assurance or the assurance of my fellows any secondary testimony.

9. What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder, because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

10. The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it scatters your force. It loses your time and blurs the impression of your character. If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible Society, vote with a great party either for the Government or against it, spread your table like base housekeepers,—under all these

screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are. And, of course, so much force is withdrawn from your proper life. But do your work, and I shall know you.° Do your work, and you shall reinforce yourself. A man must consider what a blind-man's-buff is this game of conformity. If I know your sect, I anticipate your argument. I hear a preacher announce for his text and topic the expediency of one of the institutions of his church. Do I not know beforehand that not possibly can he say a new and spontaneous word? Do I not know that, with all this ostentation of examining the grounds of the institution, he will do no such thing? Do I not know that he is pledged to himself not to look but at one side, —the permitted side, not as a man, but as a parish minister? He is a retained attorney, and these airs of the bench° are the emptiest affectation. Well, most men have bound their eyes with one or another handkerchief, and attached themselves to some one of these communities of opinion. This conformity makes them not false in a few particulars, authors of a few lies, but false in all particulars. Their every truth is not quite true. Their two is not the real two, their four not the real four; so that every word they say chagrins us, and we know not where to begin to set them right. Meantime nature is not slow to equip us in the

prison-uniform of the party to which we adhere. We come to wear one cut of face and figure, and acquire by degrees the gentlest asinine expression. There is a mortifying experience in particular, which does not fail to wreck itself also in the general history; I mean "the foolish face of praise," the forced smile which we put on in company where we do not feel at ease in answer to conversation which does not interest us. The muscles, not spontaneously moved, but moved by a low usurping willfulness, grow tight about the outline of the face with the most disagreeable sensation.

11. For non-conformity the world whips you with its displeasure. And therefore a man must know how to estimate a sour face. The bystanders look askance on him in the public street or in the friend's parlor. If this aversation had its origin in contempt and resistance like his own, he might well go home with a sad countenance; but the sour faces of the multitude, like their sweet faces, have no deep cause, but are put on and off as the wind blows and a newspaper directs. Yet is the discontent of the multitude more formidable than that of the senate and the college. It is easy enough for a firm man who knows the world to brook the rage of the cultivated classes. Their rage is decorous and prudent, for they are timid as being very vulnerable themselves. But when

to their feminine rage the indignation of the people is added, when the ignorant and the poor are aroused, when the unintelligent brute force that lies at the bottom of society is made to growl and mow, it needs the habit of magnanimity and religion to treat it godlike as a trifle of no concernment.

12. The other terror that scares us from self-trust is our consistency; a reverence for our past act or word because the eyes of others have no other data for computing our orbit than our past acts, and we are loath to disappoint them.

13. But why should you keep your head over your shoulder? Why drag about this corpse of your memory, lest you contradict somewhat you have stated in this or that public place? Suppose you should contradict yourself; what then? It seems to be a rule of wisdom never to rely on your memory alone, scarcely even in acts of pure memory, but to bring the past for judgment into the thousand-eyed present, and live ever in a new day. Trust your emotion. In your metaphysics you have denied personality to the Deity; yet when the devout motions of the soul come, yield to them heart and life, though they should clothe God with shape and color. Leave your theory, as Joseph his coat° in the hand of the harlot, and flee.

14. A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of

little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said to-day.—"Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood." Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood? Pythagoras° was misunderstood, and Socrates,° and Jesus, and Luther,° and Copernicus,° and Galileo,° and Newton,° and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.

15. I suppose no man can violate his nature. All the sallies of his will are rounded in by the law of his being, as the inequalities of Andes and Himmaleh are insignificant in the curve of the sphere. Nor does it matter how you gauge and try him. A character is like an acrostic or Alexandrian stanza°;—read it forward, backward, or across, it still spells the same thing. In this pleasing contrite wood-life which God allows me, let me record day by day my honest thought without prospect or retrospect, and, I cannot doubt, it will be found symmetrical, though I mean it not and see it not. My book should smell of pines and resound with the hum of insects. The swallow over my window

should interweave that thread or straw he carries in his bill into my web also. We pass for what we are. Character teaches above our wills. Men imagine that they communicate their virtue or vice only by overt actions, and do not see that virtue or vice emit a breath every moment.

16. There will be an agreement in whatever variety of actions, so they be each honest and natural in their hour. For of one will, the actions will be harmonious, however unlike they seem. These varieties are lost sight of at a little distance, at a little height of thought. One tendency unites them all. The voyage of the best ship is a zigzag line of a hundred tacks. See the line from a sufficient distance, and it straightens itself to the average tendency. Your genuine action will explain itself, and will explain your other genuine actions. Your conformity explains nothing. Act singly, and what you have already done singly will justify you now. Greatness appeals to the future. If I can be firm enough to-day to do right and scorn eyes, I must have done so much right before as to defend me now. Be it how it will, do right now. Always scorn appearances, and you always may. The force of character is cumulative. All the foregone days of virtue work their health into this. What makes the majesty of the heroes of the senate and the field, which so

fills the imagination? The consciousness of a train of great days and victories behind. They shed a united light on the advancing actor. He is attended as by a visible escort of angels. That is it which throws thunder into Chatham's voice,° and dignity into Washington's port, and America into Adam's° eye. Honor is venerable to us because it is no ephemeris. It is always ancient virtue. We worship it to-day because it is not of to-day. We love it and pay it homage, because it is not a trap for our love and homage, but is self-dependent, self-derived, and therefore of an old immaculate pedigree, even if shown in a young person.

17. I hope in these days we have heard the last of conformity and consistency. Let the words be gazetted and ridiculous henceforward. Instead of the gong for dinner, let us hear a whistle from the Spartan fife.° Let us never bow and apologize more. A great man is coming to eat at my house. I do not wish to please him; I wish that he should wish to please me. It will stand here for humanity, and though I would make it kind, I would make it true. Let us affront and reprimand the smooth mediocrity and squalid contentment of the times, and hurl in the face of custom, and trade, and office, the fact which is the upshot of all history, that there is a great responsible Thinker and Actor working wherever

a man works; that a true man belongs to no other time or place, but is the centre of things. Where he is, there is nature. He measures you, and all men, and all events. Ordinarily, every body in society reminds us of somewhat else, or of some other person. Character, reality, reminds you of nothing else; it takes place of the whole creation. The man must be so much that he must make all circumstances indifferent. Every true man is a cause, a country, and an age; requires infinite spaces and numbers and time fully to accomplish his design;—and posterity seems to follow his steps as a train of clients. A man Cæsar is born, and for ages after we have a Roman Empire. Christ is born, and millions of minds so grow and cleave to his genius, that he is confounded with virtue and the possible of man. An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man; as Monachism, of the Hermit Antony°; the Reformation, of Luther; Quakerism, of Fox°; Methodism, of Wesley°; Abolition, of Clarkson.° Scipio,° Milton called "the height of Rome;" and all history resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons.

18. Let a man then know his worth, and keep things under his feet. Let him not peep or steal, or skulk up and down with the air of a charity-boy, a bastard, or an interloper,

in the world which exists for him. But the man in the street, finding no worth in himself which corresponds to the force which built a tower or sculptured a marble god, feels poor when he looks on these. To him a palace, a statue, or a costly book have an alien and forbidding air, much like a gay equipage, and seem to say like that, "Who are you, sir?" Yet they all are his, suitors for his notice, petitioners to his faculties that they will come out and take possession. The picture waits for my verdict; it is not to command me, but I am to settle its claim to praise. That popular fable° of the sot who was picked up dead drunk in the street, carried to the duke's house, washed and dressed and laid in the duke's bed, and, on his waking, treated with all obsequious ceremony like the duke, and assured that he had been insane, owes its popularity to the fact, that it symbolizes so well the state of man, who is in the world a sort of sot, but now and then wakes up, exercises his reason, and finds himself a true prince.

19. Our reading is mendicant and sycophantic. In history, our imagination plays us false. Kingdom and lordship, power and estate, are a gaudier vocabulary than private John and Edward in a small house and common day's work; but the things of life are the same to both; the sum total of both is the same. Why

all this deference to Alfred° and Scanderbeg° and Gustavus°? Suppose they were virtuous; did they wear out virtue? As great a stake depends on your private act to-day, as followed their public and renowned steps. When private men shall act with original views, the lustre will be transferred from the actions of kings to those of gentlemen.

20. The world has been instructed by its kings, who have so magnetized the eyes of nations. It has been taught by this colossal symbol the mutual reverence that is due from man to man. The joyful loyalty with which men have everywhere suffered the king, the noble, or the great proprietor to walk among them by a law of his own, make his own scale of men and things, and reverse theirs, pay for benefits not with money but with honor, and represent the Law in his person, was the hieroglyphic by which they obscurely signified their consciousness of their own right and comeliness, the right of every man.

21. The magnetism which all original action exerts is explained when we inquire the reason of self-trust. Who is the Trustee? What is the aboriginal Self, on which a universal reliance may be grounded? What is the nature and power of that science-baffling star, without parallax,° without calculable elements, which shoots a ray of beauty even into trivial and

impure actions, if the least mark of independence appear? The inquiry leads us to that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct. We denote this primary wisdom as Intuition, whilst all later teachings are tuitions. In that deep force, the last fact behind which analysis cannot go, all things find their common origin. For, the sense of being which in calm hours rises, we know not how, in the soul, is not diverse from things, from space, from light, from time, from man, but one with them, and proceeds obviously from the same source whence their life and being also proceed. We first share the life by which things exist, and afterwards see them as appearances in nature, and forget that we have shared their cause. Here is the fountain of action and of thought. Here are the lungs of that inspiration which giveth man wisdom, and which cannot be denied without impiety and atheism. We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity. When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams. If we ask whence this comes, if we seek to pry into the soul that causes, all philosophy is at fault. Its presence or its absence is all we can affirm. Every man discriminates between the volun-

tary acts of his mind, and his involuntary perceptions, and knows that to his involuntary perceptions a perfect faith is due. He may err in the expression of them, but he knows that these things are so, like day and night, not to be disputed. My willful actions and acquisitions are but roving;—the idlest reverie, the faintest native emotion, command my curiosity and respect. Thoughtless people contradict as readily the statement of perceptions as of opinions, or rather much more readily; for they do not distinguish between perception and notion. They fancy that I choose to see this or that thing. But perception is not whimsical, but fatal. If I see a trait, my children will see it after me, and in course of time, all mankind,—although it may chance that no one has seen it before me. For my perception of it is as much a fact as the sun.

22. The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure, that it is profane to seek to interpose helps. It must be that when God speaketh he should communicate, not one thing, but all things; should fill the world with his voice; should scatter forth light, nature, time, souls, from the centre of the present thought; and new date and new create the whole. Whenever a mind is simple, and receives a divine wisdom, old things pass away,—means, teachers, texts, temples fall; it lives now, and

THE SECOND CHURCH OF BOSTON
"Old North"—in Hanover Street, where Emerson was pastor, 1829-1832.

absorbs past and future into the present hour. All things are made sacred by relation to it,—one as much as another. All things are dissolved to their centre by their cause, and in the universal miracle, petty and particular miracles disappear. If, therefore, a man claims to know and speak of God, and carries you backward to the phraseology of some old mouldered nation in another country, in another world, believe him not. Is the acorn better than the oak which is its fullness and completion? Is the parent better than the child into whom he has cast his ripened being? Whence, then, this worship of the past°? The centuries are conspirators against the sanity and authority of the soul. Time and space are but physiological colors which the eye makes, but the soul is light; where it is, is day; where it was, is night; and history is an impertinence and an injury, if it be anything more than a cheerful apologue or parable of my being and becoming.

23. Man is timid and apologetic; he is no longer upright; he dares not say, "I think," "I am," but quotes some saint or sage. He is ashamed before the blade of grass or the blowing rose. These roses under my window make no reference to former roses or to better ones; they are for what they are; they exist with God to-day. There is no time to them. There is

simply the rose; it is perfect in every moment of its existence. Before a leaf-bud has burst, its whole life acts; in the full-blown flower there is no more; in the leafless root there is no less. Its nature is satisfied, and it satisfies nature, in all moments alike. But man postpones or remembers; he does not live in the present, but with reverted eye laments the past, or, heedless of the riches that surround him, stands on tiptoe to forsee the future. He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with nature in the present, above time.

24. This should be plain enough. Yet see what strong intellects dare not yet hear God himself, unless he speak the phraseology of I know not what David, or Jeremiah, or Paul. We shall not always set so great a price on a few texts,° on a few lives. We are like children who repeat by rote the sentences of grandames and tutors, and, as they grow older, of the men of talents and character they chance to see,—painfully recollecting the exact words they spoke; afterwards, when they come into the point of view which those had who uttered these sayings, they understand them, and are willing to let the words go; for at any time, they can use words as good when occasion comes. If we live truly, we shall see truly. It is as easy for the strong man to be strong, as it is for the weak to be weak. When we have

new perception, we shall gladly disburden the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish. When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

25. And now at last the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far off remembering of the intuition. That thought, by what I can now nearest approach to say it, is this. When good is near you, when you have life in yourself, it is not by any known or accustomed way; you shall not discern the footprints of any other; you shall not see the face of man; you shall not hear any name; the way, the thought, the good, shall be wholly strange and new. It shall exclude example and experience. You take the way from man, not to man. All persons that ever existed are its forgotten ministers. Fear and hope are alike beneath it. There is somewhat low even in hope. In the hour of vision, there is nothing that can be called gratitude, nor properly joy. The soul raised over passion beholds identity and eternal causation, perceives the self-existence of Truth and Right, and calms itself with knowing that all things go well. Vast spaces of nature; the Atlantic Ocean, the South Sea,—long intervals of time, years, centuries,—are of no account. This which I think

and feel underlay every former state of life and circumstances, as it does underlie my present, and what is called life, and what is called death.

26. Life only avails, not the having lived. Power ceases in the instant of repose; it resides in the moment of transition from a past to a new state, in the shooting of the gulf, in the darting to an aim. This one fact the world hates, that the soul *becomes;* for that forever degrades the past, turns all riches to poverty, all reputation to a shame, confounds the saint with the rogue, shoves Jesus and Judas equally aside. Why, then, do we prate of self-reliance? Inasmuch as the soul is present, there will be power not confident but agent. To talk of reliance is a poor external way of speaking. Speak rather of that which relies, because it works and is. Who has more obedience than I masters me, though he should not raise his finger. Round him I must revolve by the gravitation of spirits. We fancy it rhetoric, when we speak of eminent virtue. We do not yet see that virtue is Height, and that a man or a company of men, plastic and permeable to principles, by the law of nature must overpower and ride all cities, nations, kings, rich men, poets, who are not.

27. This is the ultimate fact which we so quickly reach on this, as on every topic, the

resolution of all into the ever-blessed ONE. Self-existence is the attribute of the Supreme Cause, and it constitutes the measure of good by the degree in which it enters into all lower forms. All things real are so by so much virtue as they contain. Commerce, husbandry, hunting, whaling, war, eloquence, personal weight, are somewhat, and engage my respect as examples of its presence and impure action. I see the same law working in nature for conservation and growth. Power is in nature the essential measure of right. Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdoms which cannot help itself. The genesis and maturation of a planet, its poise and orbit, the bended tree recovering itself from the strong wind, the vital resources of every animal and vegetable, are demonstrations of the self-sufficing, and therefore self-relying soul.

28. Thus all concentrates; let us not rove; let us sit at home with the cause. Let us stun and astonish the intruding rabble of men and books and institutions, by a simple declaration of the divine fact. Bid the invaders take the shoes from off their feet,° for God is here within. Let our simplicity judge them, and our docility to our own law demonstrate the poverty of nature and fortune beside our native riches.

29. But now we are a mob. Man does not

stand in awe of man, nor is his genius admonished to stay at home, to put itself in communication with the internal ocean, but it goes abroad to beg a cup of water of the urns of other men. We must go alone. I like the silent church before the service begins, better than any preaching. How far off, how cool, how chaste the persons look, begirt each one with a precinct or sanctuary! So let us always sit. Why should we assume the faults of our friend, or wife, or father, or child, because they sit around our hearth, or are said to have the same blood? All men have my blood, and I have all men's. Not for that will I adopt their petulance or folly, even to the extent of being ashamed of it. But your isolation must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be elevation. At times the whole world seems to be in conspiracy to importune you with emphatic trifles. Friend, client, child, sickness, fear, want, charity, all knock at once at thy closet door and say, "Come out unto us." But keep thy state; come not into their confusion. The power men possess to annoy me, I give them by a weak curiosity. No man can come near me but through my act. "What we love that we have, but by desire we bereave ourselves of the love."

30. If we cannot at once rise to the sanctities of obedience and faith, let us at least resist

our temptations; let us enter into the state of war, and wake Thor° and Woden,° courage and constancy in our Saxon breasts. This is to be done in our smooth times by speaking the truth. Check this lying hospitality and lying affection. Live no longer to the expectation of these deceived and deceiving people with whom we converse. Say to them, O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I have lived with you after appearances hitherto. Henceforward I am the truth's. Be it known unto you that henceforward I obey no law less than the eternal law. I will have no covenants but proximities. I shall endeavor to nourish my parents, to support my family, to be the chaste husband of one wife,—but these relations I must fill after a new and unprecedented way. I appeal from your customs. I must be myself. I cannot break myself any longer for you, or you. If you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier. If you cannot, I will still seek to deserve that you should. I will not hide my tastes or aversions. I will so trust that what is deep is holy, that I will do strongly before the sun and moon whatever inly rejoices me, and the heart appoints. If you are noble, I will love you; if you are not, I will not hurt you and myself by hypocritical attentions. If you are true, but not in the same truth with me, cleave to your companions; I

will seek my own. I do this not selfishly, but humbly and truly. It is alike your interest, and mine, and all men's, however long we have dwelt in lies, to live in truth. Does this sound harsh to-day? You will soon love what is dictated by your nature as well as mine, and, if we follow the truth, it will bring us out safe at last.° But so you may give these friends pain. Yes, but I cannot sell my liberty and my power, to save their sensibility. Besides, all persons have their moments of reason, when they look out into the region of absolute truth; then will they justify me, and do the same thing.

31. The populace think that your rejection of popular standards is a rejection of all standard, and mere antinomianism°; and the bold sensualist will use the name of philosophy to gild his crimes. But the law of consciousness abides. There are two confessionals, in one or the other of which we must be shriven. You may fulfil your round of duties by clearing yourself in the *direct,* or in the *reflex* way. Consider whether you have satisfied your relations to father, mother, cousin, neighbor, town, cat and dog; whether any of these can upbraid you. But I may also neglect this reflex standard, and absolve me to myself. I have my own stern claims and perfect circle. It denies the

name of duty to many offices that are called duties. But if I can discharge its debts, it enables me to dispense with the popular code. If any one imagines that this law is lax, let him keep its commandment one day.

32. And truly it demands something godlike in him who has cast off the common motives of humanity, and has ventured to trust himself for a task-master. High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law, to himself, that a simple purpose may be to him as strong as iron necessity is to others!

33. If any man consider the present aspects of what is called by distinction *society,* he will see the need of these ethics. The sinew and heart of man seem to be drawn out, and we are become timorous, desponding whimperers. We are afraid of truth, afraid of fortune, afraid of death, and afraid of each other. Our age yields no great and perfect persons. We want men and women who shall renovate life and our social state, but we see that most natures are insolvent; cannot satisfy their own wants, have an ambition out of all proportion to their practical force, and do lean and beg day and night continually. Our housekeeping is mendicant, our arts, our occupations, our marriages, our religion we have not chosen, but

society has chosen for us. We are parlor soldiers. We shun the rugged battle of fate, where strength is born.

34. If our young men miscarry in their first enterprises, they lose all heart. If the young merchant fails, men say he is *ruined*. If the finest genius studies at one of our colleges, and is not installed in an office within one year afterwards in the cities or suburbs of Boston or New York, it seems to his friends and to himself that he is right in being disheartened, and in complaining the rest of his life. A sturdy lad from New Hampshire or Vermont, who in turn tries all the professions, who *teams it, farms it, peddles,* keeps a school, preaches, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, buys a township, and so forth, in successive years, and always, like a cat, falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls. He walks abreast with his days, and feels no shame in not "studying a profession," for he does not postpone his life, but lives already. He has not one chance, but a hundred chances. Let a Stoic° open the resources of man, and tell men they are not leaning willows, but can and must detach themselves; that with the exercise of self-trust, new powers shall appear; that a man is the word made flesh,° born to shed healing to the nations,° that he should be ashamed of our compassion, and that the moment he acts from

himself, tossing the laws, the books, idolatries and customs out of the window,—we pity him no more but thank and revere him,—and that teacher shall restore the life of man to splendor, and make his name dear to all history.

35. It is easy to see that a greater self-reliance must work a revolution in all the offices and relations of men; in their religion; in their education; in their pursuits; their modes of living; their association; in their property; in their speculative views.

36. In what prayers do men allow themselves! That which they call a holy office is not so much as brave and manly. Prayer looks abroad and asks for some foreign addition to come through some foreign virtue, and loses itself in endless mazes of natural and supernatural, and mediatorial and miraculous. Prayer that craves a particular commodity,—anything less than all good,—is vicious. Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul. It is the spirit of God pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to effect a private end is theft and meanness. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg. He will then see prayer in all action. The prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weed it, the

prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature, though for cheap ends. Caratach,° in Fletcher's *Bonduca,* when admonished to inquire the mind of the god Audate, replies,—

> "His hidden meaning lies in our endeavors;
> Our valors are our best gods."

37. Another sort of false prayers are our regrets. Discontent is the want of self-reliance: it is infirmity of will. Regret calamities, if you can thereby help the sufferer; if not, attend your own work, and already the evil begins to be repaired. Our sympathy is just as base. We come to them who weep foolishly, and sit down and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks, putting them once more in communication with their own reason. The secret of fortune is joy in our hands. Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide: him all tongues greet, all honors crown, all eyes follow with desire. Our love goes out to him and embraces him, because he did not need it. We solicitously and apologetically caress and celebrate him, because he held on his way and scorned our disapprobation. The gods love him because men hated him. "To the persevering mortal," said

Zoroaster,° "the blessed Immortals are swift."

38. As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect. They say with those foolish Israelites, "Let not God speak to us, lest we die. Speak thou, speak any man with us, and we will obey."° Everywhere I am hindered of meeting God in my brother, because he has shut his own temple doors, and recites fables merely of his brother's, or his brother's brother's God. Every new mind is a new classification. If it prove a mind of uncommon activity and power, a Locke,° a Lavoisier,° a Hutton,° a Bentham,° a Fourier,° it imposes its classification on other men, and lo! a new system. In proportion always to the depth of the thought, and so to the number of the objects it touches and brings within reach of the pupil, is his complacency, But chiefly is this apparent in creeds and churches, which are also classifications of some powerful mind acting on the elemental thought of duty, and man's relation to the Highest. Such is Calvinism,° Quakerism,° Swedenborgianism.° The pupil takes the same delight in subordinating everything to the new terminology that a girl does who has just learned botany in seeing a new earth and new seasons thereby. It will happen for a time, that the pupil will find his intellectual power has grown by the

study of his master's mind. But in all unbalanced minds, the classification is idolized, passes for the end, and not for a speedily exhaustible means, so that the walls of the system blend to their eye in the remote horizon with the walls of the universe; the luminaries of heaven seem to them hung on the arch their master built. They cannot imagine how you aliens have any right to see—how you can see; "It must be somehow that you stole the light from us." They do not yet perceive that light, unsystematic, indomitable, will break into any cabin, even into theirs. Let them chirp awhile and call it their own. If they are honest and do well, presently their neat new pinfold will be too strait and low, will crack, will lean, will rot and vanish, and the immortal light, all young and joyful, million-orbed, million-colored, will beam over the universe as on the first morning.

39. It is for want of self-culture that the superstition of Traveling, whose idols are Italy, England, Egypt, retains its fascination for all educated Americans. They who made England, Italy, or Greece venerable in the imagination did so by sticking fast where they were, like an axis of the earth. In manly hours, we feel that duty is our place. The soul is no traveler; the wise man stays at home, and when his necessities, his duties, on any occasion call

him from his house, or into foreign lands, he is at home still, and shall make men sensible by the expression of his countenance, that he goes, the missionary of wisdom and virtue, and visits cities and men like a sovereign, and not like an interloper or a valet.

40. I have no churlish objection to the circumnavigation of the globe, for the purposes of art, of study, and benevolence, so that the man is first domesticated, or does not go abroad with the hope of finding somewhat greater than he knows. He who travels to be amused, or to get somewhat which he does not carry, travels away from himself, and grows old even in youth among old things. In Thebes,° in Palmyra,° his will and mind have become old and dilapidated as they. He carries ruins to ruins.

41. Traveling is a fool's paradise. Our first journeys discover to us the indifference of places. At home I dream that at Naples, at Rome, I can be intoxicated with beauty, and lose my sadness. I pack my trunk, embrace my friends, embark on the sea, and at last wake up in Naples, and there beside me is the stern fact, the sad self, unrelenting, identical, that I fled from. I seek the Vatican° and the palaces. I affect to be intoxicated with sights and suggestions, but I am not intoxicated. My giant goes with me wherever I go.

42. But the rage of traveling is a symptom

of a deeper unsoundness affecting the whole intellectual action. The intellect is vagabond, and our system of education fosters restlessness. Our minds travel when our bodies are forced to stay at home. We imitate; and what is imitation but the traveling of the mind? Our houses are built with foreign taste; our shelves are garnished with foreign ornaments; our opinions, our tastes, our faculties, lean, and follow the Past and the Distant. The soul created the arts wherever they have flourished. It was in his own mind that the artist sought his model. It was an application of his own thought to the thing to be done and the conditions to be observed. And why need we copy the Doric° or the Gothic° model? Beauty, convenience, grandeur of thought, and quaint expression are as near to us as to any, and if the American artist will study with hope and love the precise thing to be done by him, considering the climate, the soil, the length of the day, the wants of the people, the habit and form of the government, he will create a house in which all these will find themselves fitted, and taste and sentiment will be satisfied also.

43. Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another, you have only an extemporaneous half possession.

That which each can do best, none but his Maker can teach him. No man yet knows what it is, nor can, till that person has exhibited it. Where is the master who could have taught Shakspeare°? Where is the master who could have instructed Franklin,° or Washington,° or Bacon,° or Newton°? Every great man is a unique. The Scipionism of Scipio° is precisely that part he could not borrow. Shakspeare will never be made by the study of Shakspeare. Do that which is assigned you and you cannot hope too much or dare too much. There is at this moment, for you an utterance brave and grand as that of the colossal chisel of Phidias,° or trowel of the Egyptians, or the pen of Moses,° or Dante,° but different from all these. Not possibly will the soul all rich, all eloquent, with thousand cloven tongue, deign to repeat itself; but if you can hear what these patriarchs say, surely you can reply to them in the same pitch of voice; for the ear and the tongue are two organs of one nature. Abide in the simple and noble regions of thy life, obey thy heart, and thou shalt reproduce the Foreworld° again.

44. As our Religion, our Education, our Art look abroad, so does our spirit of society. All men plume themselves on the improvement of society, and no man improves.

45. Society never advances. It recedes as

fast on one side as it gains on the other. It undergoes continual changes; it is barbarous, it is civilized, it is christianized, it is rich, it is scientific; but this change is not amelioration. For everything that is given, something is taken. Society acquires new arts, and loses old instincts. What a contrast between the well-clad, reading, writing, thinking American, with a watch, a pencil, and a bill of exchange in his pocket, and the naked New Zealander, whose property is a club, a spear, a mat, and an undivided twentieth of a shed to sleep under! But compare the health of the two men, and you shall see that the white man has lost his aboriginal strength. If the traveler tell us truly, strike the savage with a broad-ax, and in a day or two the flesh shall unite and heal as if you struck the blow into soft pitch, and the same blow shall send the white to his grave.

46. The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, but lacks so much support of muscle. He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac° he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky. The solstice he does not observe, the equinox he knows as little; and the whole bright calendar of the year is without a dial in his mind.

His note-books impair his memory; his libraries overload his wit; the insurance office increases the number of accidents; and it may be a question whether machinery does not incumber; whether we have not lost by refinement some energy, by a Christianity intrenched in establishments and forms, some vigor of wild virtue. For every stoic was a stoic; but in Christendom where is the Christian?

47. There is no more deviation in the moral standard than in the standard of height or bulk. No greater men are now than ever were. A singular equality may be observed between the great men of the first and of the last ages; nor can all the science, art, religion, and philosophy of the nineteenth century avail to educate men than Plutarch's° heroes, three or four and twenty centuries ago. Not in time is the race progressive. Phocion,° Socrates, Anaxagoras,° Diogenes,° are great men, but they leave no class. He who is really of their class will not be called by their name, but will be his own man, and, in his turn, the founder of a sect. The arts and inventions of each period are only its costume, and do not invigorate men. The harm of the improved machinery may compensate its good. Hudson° and Behring° accomplished so much in their fishing-boats, as to astonish Parry° and Franklin,° whose equipment exhausted the resources of science and

art. Galileo,° with an opera-glass, discovered a more splendid series of celestial phenomena than any one since. Columbus found the New World in an undecked boat. It is curious to see the periodical disuse and perishing of means and machinery, which were introduced with loud laudation a few years or centuries before. The great genius returns to essential man. We reckoned the improvements of the art of war among the triumphs of science, and yet Napoleon° conquered Europe by the bivouac, which consisted of falling back on naked valor, and disincumbering it of all aids. The Emperor held it impossible to make a perfect army, says Las Casas,° "without abolishing our arms, magazines, commissaries, and carriages, until, in imitation of the Roman custom, the soldier should receive his supply of corn, grind it in his hand-mill, and bake his bread himself."

48. Society is a wave. The wave moves onward, but the water of which it is composed does not. The same particle does not rise from the valley to the ridge. Its unity is only phenomenal. The persons who make up a nation to-day, next year die, and their experience with them.

49. And so the reliance on Property, including the reliance on governments which protect it, is the want of self-reliance. Men have looked away from themselves and at

things so long, that they have come to esteem the religious, learned and civil institutions as guards of property, and they deprecate assaults on these, because they feel them to be assaults on property. They measure their esteem of each other by what each has, and not by what each is. But a cultivated man becomes ashamed of his property, out of new respect for his nature. Especially he hates what he has, if he see that it is accidental,—came to him by inheritance, or gift, or crime; then he feels that it is not having; it does not belong to him, has no root in him, and merely lies there, because no revolution or no robber takes it away. But that which a man is, does always by necessity acquire, and what the man acquires is living property, which does not wait the beck of rulers, or mobs, or revolutions, or fire, or storm, or bankruptcies, but perpetually renews itself wherever the man breathes. "Thy lot or portion of life," said the Caliph Ali,° "is seeking after thee; therefore be at rest from seeking after it." Our dependence on these foreign goods leads us to our slavish respect for numbers. The political parties meet in numerous conventions; the greater the concourse, and with each new uproar of announcement, The delegation from Essex! The Democrats from New Hampshire! The Whigs of Maine! the young patriot feels himself stronger

than before by a new thousand of eyes and arms. In like manner the reformers summon conventions, and vote and resolve in multitude. Not so, O friends! will the God deign to enter and inhabit you, but by a method precisely the reverse. It is only as a man puts off all foreign support, and stands alone, that I see him to be strong and to prevail. He is weaker by every recruit to his banner. Is not a man better than a town? Ask nothing of men, and, in endless mutation, thou only firm column must presently appear the upholder of all that surrounds thee. He who knows that power is inborn, that he is weak because he has looked for good out of him and elsewhere, and so perceiving, throws himself unhesitatingly on his thought, instantly rights himself, stands in the erect position, commands his limbs, works miracles; just as a man who stands on his feet is stronger than a man who stands on his head.

50. So use all that is called Fortune. Most men gamble with her, and gain all, and lose all, as her wheel rolls.° But do thou leave as unlawful these winnings, and deal with Cause and Effect, the chancellors of God. In the Will work and acquire, and thou hast chained the wheel of Chance, and shalt sit hereafter out of fear from her rotations. A political victory, a rise of rents, the recovery of your sick, or

the return of your absent friend, or some other favorable event, raises your spirits, and you think good days are preparing for you. Do not believe it. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles.

HEROISM

Paradise is under the shadow of swords.
—*Mahomet.*

1. In the elder English dramatists,° and mainly in the plays of Beaumont° and Fletcher,° there is a constant recognition of gentility, as if a noble behavior were as easily marked in the society of their age, as color is in our American population. When any Rodrigo, Pedro, or Valerio° enters, though he be a stranger, the duke or governor exclaims, This is a gentleman,—and proffers civilities without end; but all the rest are slag and refuse. In harmony with this delight in personal advantages, there is in their plays a certain heroic cast of character and dialogue,—as in Bonduca, Sophocles, the Mad Lover, the Double Marriage,°—wherein the speaker is so earnest and cordial, and on such deep grounds of character, that the dialogue, on the slightest additional incident in the plot, rises naturally into poetry. Among many texts, take the following. The Roman Martius has conquered Athens,—all but the invincible spirits of Sophocles, the duke of Athens, and Dorigen,

his wife. The beauty of the latter inflames Martius, and he seeks to save her husband; but Sophocles will not ask his life, although assured that a word will save him, and the execution of both proceeds.

Valerius. Bid thy wife farewell.
Soph. No, I will take no leave. My Dorigen,
Yonder, above, 'bout Ariadne's crown,°
My spirit shall hover for thee. Prithee, haste.
Dor. Stay, Sophocles—with this, tie up my sight;
Let not soft nature so transformed be,
And lose her gentler sexed humanity,
To make me see my lord bleed. So, 'tis well;
Never one object underneath the sun
Will I behold before my Sophocles:
Farewell; now teach the Romans how to die.
Mar. Dost know what 'tis to die?
Soph. Thou dost not, Martius,
And therefore, not what 'tis to live; to die
Is to begin to live. It is to end
An old, stale, weary work, and to commence
A newer, and a better. 'Tis to leave
Deceitful knaves for the society
Of gods and goodness. Thou, thyself, must part
At last, from all thy garlands, pleasures, triumphs,
And prove thy fortitude what then 'twill do.
Val. But art not grieved nor vexed to leave thy life thus?
Soph. Why should I grieve or vex for being sent
To them I ever loved best? Now, I'll kneel,
But with my back toward thee; 'tis the last duty
This trunk can do the gods.
Mar. Strike, strike, Valerius,
Or Martius' heart will leap out at his mouth:
This is a man, a woman! Kiss thy lord,
And live with all the freedom you were wont.
O love! thou doubly hast afflicted me

With virtue and with beauty. Treacherous heart,
My hand shall cast thee quick into my urn,
Ere thou transgress this knot of piety.
Val. What ails my brother?
Soph. Martius, oh Martius,
Thou now hast found a way to conquer me.
Dor. O star of Rome! what gratitude can speak
Fit words to follow such a deed as this?
Mar. This admirable duke, Valerius,
With his disdain of fortune and of death,
Captived himself, has captived me,
And though my arm hath ta'en his body here,
His soul hath subjugated Martius' soul.
By Romulus, he is all soul, I think;
He hath no flesh, and spirit cannot be gyved;
Then we have vanquished nothing; he is free,
And Martius walks now in captivity.

2. I do not readily remember any poem, play, sermon, novel, or oration, that our press vents in the last few years, which goes to the same tune. We have a great many flutes and flageolets, but not often the sound of any fife. Yet, Wordsworth's Laodamia,° and the ode of "Dion,°" and some sonnets, have a certain noble music; and Scott will sometimes draw a stroke like the portrait of Lord Evandale,° given by Balfour of Burley.° Thomas Carlyle,° with his natural taste for what is manly and daring in character, has suffered no heroic trait in his favorites to drop from his biographical and historical pictures. Earlier, Robert Burns° has given us a song or two. In the Harleian Miscellanies,° there is an account of the battle

of Lutzen,° which deserves to be read. And Simon Ockley's° History of the Saracens recounts the prodigies of individual valor with admiration, all the more evident on the part of the narrator, that he seems to think that his place in Christian Oxford requires of him some proper protestations of abhorrence. But if we explore the literature of Heroism, we shall quickly come to Plutarch,° who is its Doctor and historian. To him we owe the Brasidas, the Dion, the Epaminondas, the Scipio of old, and I must think we are more deeply indebted to him than to all the ancient writers. Each of his Lives is a refutation to the despondency and cowardice of our religious and political theorists. A wild courage, a Stoicism° not of the schools, but of the blood, shines in every anecdote, and has given that book its immense fame.

3. We need books of this tart cathartic virtue, more than books of political science, or of private economy. Life is a festival only to the wise. Seen from the nook and chimney-side of prudence, it wears a ragged and dangerous front. The violations of the laws of nature by our predecessors and our contemporaries are punished in us also. The disease and deformity around us certify the infraction of natural, intellectual, and moral laws, and often violation on violation to breed such compound misery.

A lockjaw that bends a man's head back to his heels, hydrophobia, that makes him bark at his wife and babes, insanity, that makes him eat grass; war, plague, cholera, famine, indicate a certain ferocity in nature, which, as it had its inlet by human crime, must have its outlet by human suffering. Unhappily, almost no man exists who has not in his own person become, to some amount, a stockholder in the sin, and so made himself liable to a share in the expiation.

4. Our culture, therefore, must not omit the arming of the man. Let him hear in season that he is born into the state of war, and that the commonwealth and his own well-being require that he should not go dancing in the weeds of peace, but warned, self-collected, and neither defying nor dreading the thunder, let him take both reputation and life in his hand, and, with perfect urbanity, dare the gibbet and the mob by the absolute truth of his speech, and the rectitude of his behavior.

5. Toward all this external evil, the man within the breast assumes a warlike attitude, and affirms his ability to cope single-handed with the infinite army of enemies. To this military attitude of the soul we give the name of Heroism.° Its rudest form is the contempt for safety and ease, which makes the attractiveness of war. It is a self-trust which slights the

restraints of prudence, in the plentitude of its energy and power to repair the harms it may suffer. The hero is a mind of such balance that no disturbances can shake his will, but pleasantly, and, as it were, merrily, he advances to his own music, alike in frightful alarms, and in the tipsy mirth of universal dissoluteness. There is somewhat not philosophical in heroism; there is somewhat not holy in it; it seems not to know that other souls are of one texture with it; it has pride; it is the extreme of individual nature. Nevertheless, we must profoundly revere it. There is somewhat in great actions, which does not allow us to go behind them. Heroism feels and never reasons, and therefore is always right; and although a different breeding, different religion, and greater intellectual activity, would have modified, or even reversed the particular action, yet for the hero, that thing he does is the highest deed, and is not open to the censure of philosophers or divines. It is the avowal of the unschooled man, that he finds a quality in him that is negligent of expense, of health, of life, of danger, of hatred, of reproach, and knows that his will is higher and more excellent than all actual and all possible antagonists.

6. Heroism works in contradiction to the voice of mankind, and in contradiction, for a time, to the voice of the great and good. Hero-

ism is an obedience to a secret impulse of an individual's character. Now to no other man can its wisdom appear as it does to him, for every man must be supposed to see a little further on his own proper path than any one else. Therefore, just and wise men take umbrage at his act, until after some little time be past: then they see it to be in unison with their acts. All prudent men see that the action is clean contrary to a sensual prosperity; for every heroic act measures itself by its contempt of some external good. But it finds its own success at last, and then the prudent also extol.

7. Self-trust is the essence of heroism. It is the state of the soul at war, and its ultimate objects are the last defiance of falsehood and wrong, and the power to bear all that can be inflicted by evil agents. It speaks the truth, and it is just, generous, hospitable, temperate, scornful of petty calculations, and scornful of being scorned. It persists; it is of an undaunted boldness, and of a fortitude not to be wearied out. Its jest is the littleness of common life. That false prudence which dotes on health and wealth is the butt and merriment of heroism. Heroism, like Plotinus,° is almost ashamed of its body. What shall it say, then, to the sugar-plums, and cats'-cradles, to the toilet, compliments, quarrels, cards, and custard, which rack

THE NORTH BRIDGE, CONCORD

"Here, once the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard round the world."

the wit of all human society. What joys has kind nature provided for us dear creatures! There seems to be no interval between greatness and meanness. When the spirit is not master of the world, then is it its dupe. Yet the little man takes the great hoax so innocently, works in it so headlong and believing, is born red, and dies gray, arranging his toilet, attending on his own health, laying traps for sweet food and strong wine, setting his heart on a horse or a rifle, made happy with a little gossip or a little praise, that the great soul cannot choose but laugh at such earnest nonsense. "Indeed, these humble considerations make me out of love with greatness. What a disgrace is it to me to take note how many pairs of silk stockings thou hast, namely, these and those that were the peach-colored ones; or to bear the inventory of thy shirts, as one for superfluity, and one other for use!"

8. Citizens, thinking after the laws of arithmetic, consider the inconvenience of receiving strangers at their fireside, reckon narrowly the loss of time and the unusual display: the soul of a better quality thrusts back the unreasonable economy into the vaults of life, and says, I will obey the God, and the sacrifice and the fire he will provide. Ibn Hankal,° the Arabian geographer, describes a heroic extreme in the hospitality of Sogd, in Bokhara. "When I was

in Sogd I saw a great building, like a palace, the gates of which were open and fixed back to the wall with large nails. I asked the reason, and was told that the house had not been shut, night or day, for a hundred years. Strangers may present themselves at any hour, and in whatever number; the master has amply provided for the reception of the men and their animals, and is never happier than when they tarry for some time. Nothing of the kind have I seen in any other country." The magnanimous know very well that they who give time, or money, or shelter, to the stranger—so it be done for love, and not for ostentation—do, as it were, put God under obligation to them, so perfect are the compensations of the universe. In some way the time they seem to lose is redeemed, and the pains they seem to take remunerate themselves. These men fan the flame of human love, and raise the standard of civil virtue among mankind. But hospitality must be for service, and not for show, or it pulls down the host. The brave soul rates itself too high to value itself by the splendor of its table and draperies. It gives what it hath, and all it hath, but its own majesty can lend a better grace to bannocks and fair water than belong to city feasts.

9. The temperance of the hero proceeds from the same wish to do no dishonor to the worthi-

ness he has. But he loves it for its elegancy, not for its austerity. It seems not worth his while to be solemn, and denounce with bitterness flesh-eating or wine-drinking, the use of tobacco, or opium, or tea, or gold. A great man scarcely knows how he dines, how he dresses; but without railing or precision, his living is natural and poetic. John Eliot,° the Indian Apostle, drank water, and said of wine,—"It is a noble, generous liquor, and we should be humbly thankful for it, but, as I remember, water was made before it." Better still is the temperance of king David° who poured out on the ground unto the Lord the water which three of his warriors had brought him to drink, at the peril of their lives.

10. It is told of Brutus,° that when he fell on his sword, after the battle of Philippi,° he quoted a line of Euripides,° "O virtue! I have followed thee through life, and I find thee at last but a shade." I doubt not the hero is slandered by this report. The heroic soul does not sell its justice and its nobleness. It does not ask to dine nicely, and to sleep warm. The essence of greatness is the perception that virtue is enough. Poverty is its ornament. It does not need plenty, and can very well abide its loss.

11. But that which takes my fancy most, in the heroic class, is the good humor and hilarity

they exhibit. It is a height to which common duty can very well attain, to suffer and to dare with solemnity. But these rare souls set opinion, success, and life, at so cheap a rate, that they will not soothe their enemies by petitions, or the show of sorrow, but wear their own habitual greatness. Scipio,° charged with peculation, refuses to do himself so great a disgrace as to wait for justification, though he had the scroll of his accounts in his hands, but tears it to pieces before the tribunes. Socrates'° condemnation of himself to be maintained in all honor in the Prytaneum,° during his life, and Sir Thomas More's° playfulness at the scaffold, are of the same strain. In Beaumont and Fletcher's *Sea Voyage*, Juletta tells the stout captain and his company,

> *Jul.* Why, slaves, 'tis in our power to hang ye.
> *Master.* Very likely,
> 'Tis in our powers, then, to be hanged, and scorn ye.

These replies are sound and whole. Sport is the bloom and glow of a perfect health. The great will not condescend to take anything seriously; all must be as gay as the song of a canary, though it were the building of cities, or the eradication of old and foolish churches and nations, which have cumbered the earth long thousands of years. Simple hearts put all

the history and customs of this world behind them, and play their own play in innocent defiance of the Blue-Laws° of the world; and such would appear, could we see the human race assembled in vision, like little children frolicking together; though, to the eyes of mankind at large, they wear a stately and solemn garb of works and influences.

12. The interest these fine stories have for us, the power of a romance over the boy who grasps the forbidden book under his bench at school, our delight in the hero, is the main fact to our purpose. All these great and transcendent properties are ours. If we dilate in beholding the Greek energy, the Roman pride, it is that we are already domesticating the same sentiment. Let us find room for this great guest in our small houses. The first step of worthiness will be to disabuse us of our superstitious associations with places and times, with number and size. Why should these words, Athenian, Roman, Asia, and England, so tingle in the ear? Where the heart is, there the muses, there the gods sojourn, and not in any geography of fame. Massachusetts, Connecticut River, and Boston Bay, you think paltry places, and the ear loves names of foreign and classic topography. But here we are; and, if we will tarry a little, we may come to learn

that here is best. See to it only that thyself is here;—and art and nature, hope and fate, friends, angels, and the Supreme Being, shall not be absent from the chamber where thou sittest. Epaminondas,° brave and affectionate, does not seem to us to need Olympus to die upon, nor the Syrian sunshine. He lies very well where he is. The Jerseys were handsome ground enough for Washington to tread, and London streets for the feet of Milton. A great man makes his climate genial in the imagination of men, and its air the beloved element of all delicate spirits. That country is the fairest, which is inhabited by the noblest minds. The pictures which fill the imagination in reading the actions of Pericles,° Xenophon,° Columbus, Bayard,° Sidney,° Hampden,° teach us how needlessly mean our life is, that we, by the depth of our living, should deck it with more than regal or national splendor, and act on principles that should interest man and nature in the length of our days.

13. We have seen or heard of many extraordinary young men, who never ripened, or whose performance in actual life was not extraordinary. When we see their air and mien, when we hear them speak of society, of books, of religion, we admire their superiority, they seem to throw contempt on our entire polity and social state; theirs is the tone of a youth-

ful giant, who is sent to work revolutions. But they enter an active profession, and the forming Colossus° shrinks to the common size of man. The magic they used was the ideal tendencies, which always make the Actual ridiculous; but the tough world had its revenge the moment they put their horses of the sun to plow in its furrow. They found no example and no companion, and their heart fainted. What then? The lesson they gave in their first aspirations, is yet true; and a better valor and a purer truth shall one day organize their belief. Or why should a woman liken herself to any historical woman, and think, because Sappho,° or Sévigné,° or De Staël,° or the cloistered souls who have had genius and cultivation, do not satisfy the imagination and the serene Themis,° none can,—certainly not she. Why not? She has a new and unattempted problem to solve, perchance that of the happiest nature that ever bloomed. Let the maiden, with erect soul, walk serenely on her way, accept the hint of each new experience, search, in turn, all the objects that solicit her eye, that she may learn the power and the charm of her new-born being, which is the kindling of a new dawn in the recesses of space. The fair girl, who repels interference by a decided and proud choice of influences, so careless of pleasing, so wilful and lofty, inspires every beholder

with somewhat of her own nobleness. The silent heart encourages her; O friend, never strike sail to a fear! Come into port greatly, or sail with God the seas. Not in vain you live, for every passing eye is cheered and refined by the vision.

14. The characteristic of a genuine heroism is its persistency. All men have wandering impulses, fits and starts of generosity. But when you have chosen your part, abide by it, and do not weakly try to reconcile yourself with the world. The heroic cannot be the common, nor the common the heroic. Yet we have the weakness to expect the sympathy of people in those actions whose excellence is that they outrun sympathy, and appeal to a tardy justice. If you would serve your brother, because it is fit for you to serve him, do not take back your words when you find that prudent people do not commend you. Adhere to your own act, and congratulate yourself if you have done something strange and extravagant, and broken the monotony of a decorous age. It was a high counsel that I once heard given to a young person,—"Always do what you are afraid to do." A simple manly character need never make an apology, but should regard its past action with the calmness of Phocion,° when he admitted that the event of the battle was

happy, yet did not regret his dissuasion from the battle.

15. There is no weakness or exposure for which we cannot find consolation in the thought,—this is a part of my constitution, part of my relation and office to my fellow creature. Has nature covenanted with me that I should never appear to disadvantage, never make a ridiculous figure? Let us be generous of our dignity as well as of our money. Greatness once and forever has done with opinion. We tell our charities, not because we wish to be praised for them, not because we think they have great merit, but for our justification. It is a capital blunder; as you discover, when another man recites his charities.

16. To speak the truth, even with some austerity, to live with some rigor of temperance, or some extremes of generosity, seems to be an asceticism which common good-nature would appoint to those who are at ease and in plenty, in sign that they feel a brotherhood with the great multitude of suffering men. And not only need we breathe and exercise the soul by assuming the penalties of abstinence, of debt, of solitude, of unpopularity, but it behooves the wise man to look with a bold eye into those rarer dangers which sometimes invade men, and to familiarize himself with

disgusting forms of disease, with sounds of execration, and the vision of violent death.

17. Times of heroism are generally times of terror, but the day never shines in which this element may not work. The circumstances of man, we say, are historically somewhat better in this country, and at this hour, than perhaps ever before. More freedom exists for culture. It will not now run against an ax at the first step out of the beaten track of opinion. But whoso is heroic will always find crises to try his edge. Human virtue demands her champions° and martyrs, and the trial of persecution always proceeds. It is but the other day that the brave Lovejoy° gave his breast to the bullets of a mob, for the rights of free speech and opinion, and died when it was better not to live.

18. I see not any road of perfect peace which a man can walk, but to take counsel of his own bosom. Let him quit too much association, let him go home much, and establish himself in those courses he approves. The unremitting retention of simple and high sentiments in obscure duties is hardening the character to that temper which will work with honor, if need be, in the tumult, or on the scaffold. Whatever outrages have happened to men may befall a man again; and very easily in a republic, if there appear any signs of a decay

of religion. Coarse slander, fire, tar and feathers, and the gibbet, the youth may freely bring home to his mind, and with what sweetness of temper he can, and inquire how fast he can fix his sense of duty, braving such penalties, whenever it may please the next newspaper and a sufficient number of his neighbors to pronounce his opinions incendiary.

19. It may calm the apprehension of calamity in the most susceptible heart to see how quick a bound nature has set to the utmost infliction of malice. We rapidly approach a brink over which no enemy can follow us.

"Let them rave:°
Thou art quiet in thy grave."

In the gloom of our ignorance of what shall be, in the hour when we are deaf to the higher voices, who does not envy them who have seen safely to an end their manful endeavor? Who that sees the meanness of our politics, but inly congratulates Washington that he is long already wrapped in his shroud, and forever safe; that he was laid sweet in his grave, the hope of humanity not yet subjugated in him? Who does not sometimes envy the good and brave, who are no more to suffer from the tumults of the natural world, and await with curious complacency the speedy term of his

own conversation with finite nature? And yet the love that will be annihilated sooner than be treacherous, has already made death impossible, and affirms itself no mortal, but a native of the deeps of absolute and inextinguishable being.

COMPENSATION

1. Ever since I was a boy I have wished to write a discourse on Compensation; for, it seemed to me when very young, that, on this subject, life was ahead of theology and the people knew more than the preachers taught. The documents too, from which the doctrine is to be drawn, charmed my fancy by their endless variety, and lay always before me, even in sleep; for they are the tools in our hands, the bread in our basket, the transactions of the street, the farm and the dwelling-house; greetings, relations, debts and credits, the influence of character, the nature and endowment of all men. It seemed to me also that in it might be shown men a ray of divinity, the present action of the soul of this world, clean from all vestige of tradition; and so the heart of man might be bathed by an inundation of eternal love, conversing with that which he knows was always and always must be, because it really is now. It appeared, moreover, that if this doctrine could be stated in terms with any resemblance to those bright intuitions in which this truth is sometimes revealed to us, it would be a star in many dark hours and

crooked passages in our journey, that would not suffer us to lose our way.

2. I was lately confirmed in these desires by hearing a sermon at church. The preacher, a man esteemed for his orthodoxy, unfolded in the ordinary manner the doctrine of the Last Judgment. He assumed that judgment is not executed in this world; that the wicked are successful; that the good are miserable; and then urged from reason and from Scripture a compensation to be made to both parties in the next life. No offense appeared to be taken by the congregation at this doctrine. As far as I could observe when the meeting broke up they separated without remark on the sermon.

3. Yet what was the import of this teaching? What did the preacher mean by saying that the good are miserable in the present life? Was it that houses and lands, offices, wine, horses, dress, luxury, are had by unprincipled men, whilst the saints are poor and despised; and that a compensation is to be made to these last hereafter, by giving them the like gratifications another day,—bank-stock and doubloons,° venison and champagne? This must be the compensation intended; for what else? Is it that they are to have leave to pray and praise? to love and serve men? Why, that they can do now. The legitimate inference the disciple would draw was,—"We are to have

such a good time as the sinners have now";—or, to push it to its extreme import,—"You sin now, we shall sin by-and-by; we would sin now, if we could; not being successful we expect our revenge to-morrow."

4. The fallacy lay in the immense concession that the bad are successful; that justice is not done now. The blindness of the preacher consisted in deferring to the base estimate of the market of what constitutes a manly success, instead of confronting and convicting the world from the truth; announcing the presence of the soul; the omnipotence of the will; and so establishing the standard of good and ill, of success and falsehood, and summoning the dead to its present tribunal.

5. I find a similar base tone in the popular religious works of the day and the same doctrines assumed by the literary men when occasionally they treat the related topics. I think that our popular theology has gained in decorum, and not in principle, over the superstitions it has displaced. But men are better than their theology. Their daily life gives it the lie. Every ingenuous and aspiring soul leaves the doctrine behind him in his own experience, and all men feel sometimes the falsehood which they cannot demonstrate. For men are wiser than they know. That which they hear in schools and pulpits without afterthought, if

said in conversation would probably be questioned in silence. If a man dogmatize in a mixed company on Providence and the divine laws, he is answered by a silence which conveys well enough to an observer the dissatisfaction of the hearer, but his incapacity to make his own statement.

6. I shall attempt in this and the following chapter to record some facts that indicate the path of the law of Compensation; happy beyond my expectation if I shall truly draw the smallest arc of this circle.

7. Polarity,° or action and reaction, we meet in every part of nature; in darkness and in light; in heat and cold; in the ebb and flow of waters; in male and female; in the inspiration and expiration of plants and animals; in the systole and diastole of the heart; in the undulations of fluids and of sound; in the centrifugal and centripetal gravity; in electricity, galvanism, and chemical affinity. Superinduce magnetism at one end of a needle, the opposite magnetism takes place at the other end. If the south attracts, the north repels. To empty here, you must condense there. An inevitable dualism bisects nature, so that each thing is a half, and suggests another thing to make it whole; as, spirit, matter; man, woman; odd, even; subjective, objective; in, out; upper, under; motion, rest; yea, nay.

8. Whilst the world is thus dual, so is every one of its parts. The entire system of things gets represented in every particle. There is somewhat that resembles the ebb and flow of the sea, day and night, man and woman, in a single needle of the pine, in a kernel of corn, in each individual of every animal tribe. The reaction, so grand in the elements, is repeated within these small boundaries. For example, in the animal kingdom the physiologist has observed that no creatures are favorites, but a certain compensation balances every gift and every defect. A surplusage given to one part is paid out of a reduction from another part of the same creature. If the head and neck are enlarged, the trunk and extremities are cut short.

9. The theory of the mechanic forces° is another example. What we gain in power is lost in time, and the converse. The periodic or compensating errors of the planets° is another instance. The influences of climate and soil in political history are another. The cold climate invigorates. The barren soil does not breed fevers, crocodiles, tigers, or scorpions.

10. The same dualism underlies the nature and condition of man. Every excess causes a defect; every defect an excess. Every sweet hath its sour; every evil its good. Every faculty which is a receiver of pleasure has an equal

penalty put on its abuse. It is to answer for its moderation with its life. For every grain of wit there is a grain of folly. For every thing you have missed, you have gained something else; and for every thing you gain, you lose something. If riches increase, they are increased° that use them. If the gatherer gathers too much, nature takes out of the man what she puts into his chest; swells the estate, but kills the owner. Nature hates monopolies and exceptions. The waves of the sea do not more speedily seek a level from their loftiest tossing than the varieties of condition tend to equalize themselves. There is always some levelling circumstance that puts down the overbearing, the strong, the rich, the fortunate, substantially on the same ground with all others. Is a man too strong and fierce for society and by temper and position a bad citizen,—a morose ruffian, with a dash of the pirate in him?—nature sends him a troop of pretty sons and daughters who are getting along in the dame's classes at the village school, and love and fear for them smooths his grim scowl to courtesy. Thus she contrives to intenerate the granite and felspar, takes the boar out and puts the lamb in and keeps her balance true.

11. The farmer imagines power and place are fine things. But the President.has paid dear for his White House. It has commonly cost him

all his peace, and the best of his manly attributes. To preserve for a short time so conspicuous an appearance before the world, he is content to eat dust before the real masters who stand erect behind the throne. Or do men desire the more substantial and permanent grandeur of genius? Neither has this an immunity. He who by force of will or of thought is great and overlooks thousands, has the charges of that eminence.° With every influx of light comes new danger. Has he light? he must bear witness to the light, and always outrun that sympathy which gives him such keen satisfaction, by his fidelity to new revelations of the incessant soul. He must hate father and mother, wife and child. Has he all that the world loves and admires and covets?—he must cast behind him their admiration and afflict them by faithfulness to his truth and become a byword and a hissing.°

12. This law writes the laws of cities and nations. It is in vain to build or plot or combine against it. Things refuse to be mismanaged long. *Res nolunt diu male administrari.*° Though no checks to a new evil appear, the checks exist, and will appear. If the government is cruel, the governor's life is not safe. If you tax too high, the revenue will yield nothing. If you make the criminal code sanguinary, juries will not convict. If the law is

too mild, private vengeance comes in. If the government is a terrific democracy, the pressure is resisted by an overcharge of energy in the citizen, and life glows with a fiercer flame. The true life and satisfactions of man seem to elude the utmost rigors or felicities of condition and to establish themselves with great indifferency under all varieties of circumstance. Under all governments the influence of character remains the same,—in Turkey and in New England about alike. Under the primeval despots of Egypt, history honestly confesses that man must have been as free as culture could make him.

13. These appearances indicate the fact that the universe is represented in every one of its particles. Every thing in nature contains all the powers of nature. Every thing is made of one hidden stuff; as the naturalist sees one type under every metamorphosis, and regards a horse as a running man, a fish as a swimming man, a bird as a flying man, a tree as a rooted man. Each new form repeats not only the main character of the type, but part for part all the details, all the aims, furtherances, hindrances, energies and whole system of every other. Every occupation, trade, art, transaction, is a compend of the world and a correlative of every other. Each one is an entire emblem of human life; of its good and ill, its

trials, its enemies, its course and its end. And each one must somehow accommodate the whole man and recite all his destiny.

14. The world globes itself in a drop of dew.° The microscope cannot find the animalcule which is less perfect for being little. Eyes, ears, taste, smell, motion, resistance, appetite, and organs of reproduction that take hold on eternity,—all find room to consist in the small creature. So do we put our life into every act. The true doctrine of omnipresence is that God reappears with all his parts in every moss and cobweb.° The value of the universe contrives to throw itself into every point. If the good is there, so is the evil; if the affinity, so the repulsion; if the force, so the limitation.

15. Thus is the universe alive. All things are moral. That soul which within us is a sentiment, outside of us is a law. We feel its inspirations; out there in history we can see its fatal strength. "It is in the world, and the world was made by it."° Justice is not postponed. A perfect equity adjusts its balance in all parts of life. Οἱ κύβοι Διὸς ἀεὶ εὐπίπτουσι,°—The dice of God are always loaded. The world looks like a multiplication-table, or a mathematical equation, which, turn it how you will, balances itself. Take what figure you will, its exact value, nor more nor less, still returns to you. Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every

virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. What we call retribution is the universal necessity by which the whole appears wherever a part appears. If you see smoke, there must be fire. If you see a hand or a limb, you know that the trunk to which it belongs is there behind.

16. Every act rewards itself, or in other words integrates itself, in a twofold manner; first in the thing, or in real nature; and secondly in the circumstance, or in apparent nature. Men call the circumstance the retribution. The casual retribution is in the thing and is seen by the soul. The retribution in the circumstance is seen by the understanding; it is inseparable from the thing, but is often spread over a long time and so does not become distinct until after many years. The specific stripes may follow late after the offense, but they follow because they accompany it. Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it. Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end pre-exists in the means, the fruit in the seed.

17. Whilst thus the world will be whole and refuses to be disparted, we seek to act partially, to sunder, to appropriate; for example,—to

gratify the senses we sever the pleasure of the senses from the needs of the character. The ingenuity of man has always been dedicated to the solution of one problem,—how to detach the sensual sweet, the sensual strong, the sensual bright, etc., from the moral sweet, the moral deep, the moral fair; that is, again, to contrive to cut clean off this upper surface so thin as to leave it bottomless; to get a *one end,* without an *other end.* The soul says, "Eat"; the body would feast. The soul says, "The man and woman shall be one flesh and one soul"; the body would join the flesh only. The soul says, "Have dominion over all things to the ends of virtue"; the body would have the power over things to its own ends.

18. The soul strives amain to live and work through all things. It would be the only fact. All things shall be added unto it,—power, pleasure, knowledge, beauty. The particular man aims to be somebody; to set up for himself; to truck and higgle for a private good; and, in particulars, to ride that he may ride; to dress that he may be dressed; to eat that he may eat; and to govern, that he may be seen. Men seek to be great; they would have offices, wealth, power and fame. They think that to be great is to get only one side of nature,—the sweet, without the other side, the bitter.

19. This dividing and detaching is steadily

counteracted. Up to this day it must be owned no projector has had the smallest success. The parted water reunites behind our hand. Pleasure is taken out of pleasant things, profit out of profitable things, power out of strong things, as soon as we seek to separate them from the whole. We can no more halve things and get the sensual good, by itself, than we can get an inside that shall have no outside, or a light without a shadow. "Drive out nature with a fork, she comes running back."°

20. Life invests itself with inevitable conditions, which the unwise seek to dodge, which one and another brags that he does not know, brags that they do not touch him;—but the brag is on his lips, the conditions are in his soul. If he escapes them in one part they attack him in another more vital part. If he has escaped them in form and in the appearance, it is because he has resisted his life and fled from himself, and the retribution is so much death. So signal is the failure of all attempts to make this separation of the good from the tax, that the experiment would not be tried,—since to try it is to be mad,—but for the circumstance that when the disease began in the will, of rebellion and separation, the intellect is at once infected, so that the man ceases to see God whole in each object, but is able to see the sensual allurement of an object and

not see the sensual hurt; he sees the mermaid's head but not the dragon's tail, and thinks he can cut off that which he would have from that which he would not have. "How secret art thou who dwellest in the highest heavens in silence, O thou only great God, sprinkling with an unwearied providence certain penal blindnesses upon such as have unbridled desires!"°

21. The human soul is true to these facts in the painting of fable, of history, of law, of proverbs, of conversation. It finds a tongue in literature unawares. Thus the Greeks called Jupiter, Supreme Mind; but having traditionally ascribed to him many base actions, they involuntarily made amends to reason by tying up the hands of so bad a god. He is made as helpless as a king of England. Prometheus° knows one secret which Jove must bargain for; Minerva,° another. He cannot get his own thunders; Minerva keeps the key of them:—

> "Of all the gods, I only know the keys
> That ope the solid doors within whose vaults
> His thunders sleep."°

A plain confession of the in-working of the All and of its moral aim. The Indian mythology ends in the same ethics; and indeed it would seem impossible for any fable to be invented and get any currency which was not moral.

Aurora° forgot to ask youth for her lover, and so, though Tithonus° is immortal, he is old. Achilles° is not quite invulnerable; the sacred waters did not wash the heel by which Thetis held him. Siegfried,° in the Nibelungen, is not quite immortal, for a leaf fell on his back whilst he was bathing in the dragon's blood, and that spot which it covered is mortal. And so it must be. There is a crack in everything God has made. It would seem there is always this vindictive circumstance stealing in at unawares even into the wild poesy in which the human fancy attempted to make bold holiday and to shake itself free of the old laws,—this back-stroke, this kick of the gun, certifying that the law is fatal; that in nature nothing can be given, all things are sold.

22. This is that ancient doctrine of Nemesis,° who keeps watch in the universe and lets no offense go unchastised. The Furies,° they said, are attendants on justice, and if the sun in heaven should transgress his path they would punish him. The poets related that stone walls and iron swords and leathern thongs had an occult sympathy with the wrongs of their owners; that the belt which Ajax° gave Hector° dragged the Trojan hero over the field at the wheels of the car of Achilles, and the sword which Hector gave Ajax was that on whose point Ajax fell. They recorded that

when the Thasians° erected a statue to Theagenes,° a victor in the games, one of his rivals went to it by night and endeavored to throw it down by repeated blows, until at last he moved it from its pedestal and was crushed to death beneath its fall.

23. This voice of fable has in it somewhat divine. It came from thought above the will of the writer. That is the best part of each writer which has nothing private in it; that is the best part of each which he does not know; that which flowed out of his constitution and not from his too active invention; that which in the study of a single artist you might not easily find, but in the study of many you would abstract as the spirit of them all. Phidias° it is not, but the work of man in that early Hellenic° world that I would know. The name and circumstance of Phidias, however convenient for history, embarrasses when we come to the highest criticism. We are to see that which man was tending to do in a given period, and was hindered, or, if you will, modified in doing, by the interfering volitions° of Phidias, of Dante,° of Shakspeare, the organ whereby man at the moment wrought.

24. Still more striking is the expression of this fact in the proverbs of all nations, which are always the literature of reason, or the statements of an absolute truth without qualifica-

tion. Proverbs, like the sacred books of each nation, are the sanctuary of the intuitions. That which the droning world, chained to appearances, will not allow the realist to say in his own words, it will suffer him to say in proverbs without contradiction. And this law of laws, which the pulpit, the senate and the college deny, is hourly preached in all markets and all languages by flights of proverbs, whose teaching is as true and as omnipresent as that of birds and flies.

25. All things are double, one against another.—Tit for tat; an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; blood for blood; measure for measure, love for love.—Give, and it shall be given you.—He that watereth shall be watered himself.—What will you have? quoth God; pay for it and take it.—Nothing venture, nothing have.—Thou shalt be paid exactly for what thou hast done, no more, no less.—Who doth not work shall not eat.—Harm watch, harm catch.—Curses always recoil on the head of him who imprecates them.—If you put a chain around the neck of a slave, the other end fastens itself around your own.—Bad counsel confounds the adviser.—The Devil is an ass.

26. It is thus written, because it is thus in life. Our action is overmastered and characterized above our will by the law of nature. We aim at a petty end quite aside from the public

THE CONCORD ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

Emerson was greatly interested in this society during his last years in Concord.

good, but our act arranges itself by irresistible magnetism in a line with the poles of the world.

27.—A man cannot speak but he judges himself. With his will or against his will he draws his portrait to the eye of his companions by every word. Every opinion reacts on him who utters it. It is a thread-ball thrown at a mark, but the other end remains in the thrower's bag. Or, rather, it is a harpoon thrown at the whale, unwinding, as it flies, a coil of cord in the boat, and, if the harpoon is not good, or not well thrown, it will go nigh to cut the steersman in twain or to sink the boat.

28. You cannot do wrong without suffering wrong. "No man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him," said Burke.° The exclusive in fashionable life does not see that he excludes himself from enjoyment, in the attempt to appropriate it. The exclusionist in religion does not see that he shuts the door of heaven on himself, in striving to shut out others. Treat men as pawns and ninepins and you shall suffer as well as they. If you leave out their heart, you shall lose your own. The senses would make things of all persons; of women, of children, of the poor. The vulgar proverb, "I will get it from his purse or get it from his skin," is sound philosophy.

29. All infractions of love and equity in our social relations are speedily punished. They are

punished by fear. Whilst I stand in simple relations to my fellow-man, I have no displeasure in meeting him. We meet as water meets water, or as two currents of air mix, with perfect diffusion and interpenetration of nature. But as soon as there is any departure from simplicity and attempt at halfness, or good for me that is not good for him, my neighbor feels the wrong; he shrinks from me as far as I have shrunk from him; his eyes no longer seek mine; there is war between us; there is hate in him and fear in me.

30. All the old abuses in society, the great and universal, and the petty and particular, all unjust accumulations of property and power, are avenged in the same manner. Fear is an instructor of great sagacity and the herald of all revolutions. One thing he always teaches, that there is rottenness where he appears. He is a carrion crow, and though you see not well what he hovers for, there is death somewhere. Our property is timid, our laws are timid, our cultivated classes are timid. Fear for ages has boded and mowed and gibbered over government and property. That obscene° bird is not there for nothing. He indicates great wrongs which must be revised.

31. Of the like nature is that expectation of change which instantly follows the suspension of our voluntary activity. The terror of cloud-

less noon, the emerald of Polycrates,° the awe of prosperity, the instinct which leads every generous soul to impose on itself tasks of a noble asceticism and vicarious virtue, are the tremblings of the balance of justice through the heart and mind of man.

32. Experienced men of the world know very well that it is best to pay scot and lot° as they go along, and that a man often pays dear for a small frugality. The borrower runs in his own debt. Has a man gained anything who has received a hundred favors and rendered none? Has he gained by borrowing, through indolence or cunning, his neighbor's wares, or horses, or money? There arises on the deed the instant acknowledgment of benefit on the one part and of debt on the other; that is, of superiority and inferiority. The transaction remains in the memory of himself and his neighbor; and every new transaction alters according to its nature their relation to each other. He may soon come to see that he had better have broken his own bones than to have ridden in his neighbor's coach, and that "the highest price he can pay for a thing is to ask for it."

33. A wise man will extend this lesson to all parts of life, and know that it is always the part of prudence to face every claimant and pay every just demand on your time, your

talents, or your heart. Always pay; for first or last you must pay your entire debt. Persons and events may stand for a time between you and justice, but it is only a postponement. You must pay at last your own debt. If you are wise you will dread a prosperity which only loads you with more. Benefit is the end of nature. But for every benefit which you receive, a tax is levied. He is great who confers the most benefits. He is base,—and that is the one base thing in the universe,—to receive favors and render none. In the order of nature we cannot render benefits to those from whom we receive them, or only seldom. But the benefit we receive must be rendered again, line for line, deed for deed, cent for cent, to somebody. Beware of too much good staying in your hand. It will fast corrupt and worm worms. Pay it away quickly in some sort.

34. Labor is watched over by the same pitiless laws. Cheapest, say the prudent, is the dearest labor. What we buy in a broom, a mat, a wagon, a knife, is some application of good sense to a common want. It is best to pay in your land a skillful gardener, or to buy good sense applied to gardening; in your sailor, good sense applied to navigation; in the house, good sense applied to cooking, sewing, serving; in your agent, good sense applied to accounts and affairs. So do you multiply your

presence, or spread yourself throughout your estate. But because of the dual constitution of things, in labor as in life there can be no cheating. The thief steals from himself. The swindler swindles himself. For the real price of labor is knowledge and virtue, whereof wealth and credit are signs. These signs, like paper money, may be counterfeited or stolen, but that which they represent, namely, knowledge and virtue, cannot be counterfeited or stolen. These ends of labor cannot be answered but by real exertions of the mind, and in obedience to pure motives. The cheat, the defaulter, the gambler, cannot extort the benefit, cannot extort the knowledge of material and moral nature which his honest care and pains yield to the operative. The law of nature is, Do the thing, and you shall have the power; but they who do not the thing have not the power.

35. Human labor, through all its forms, from the sharpening of a stake to the construction of a city or an epic, is one immense illustration of the perfect compensation of the universe. The absolute balance of Give and Take, the doctrine that everything has its price,—and if that price is not paid, not that thing but something else is obtained, and that it is impossible to get anything without its price,—is not less sublime in the columns of a ledger than in the budgets of states, in the laws of light and

darkness, in all the action and reaction of nature. I cannot doubt that the high laws which each man sees ever implicated in those processes with which he is conversant, the stern ethics which sparkled on his chisel-edge, which are measured out by his plumb and foot-rule, which stand as manifest in the footing of the shop-bill as in the history of a state,—do recommend to him his trade, and though seldom named, exalt his business to his imagination.

36. The league between virtue and nature engages all things to assume a hostile front to vice. The beautiful laws and substances of the world persecute and whip the traitor. He finds that things are arranged for truth and benefit, but there is no den in the wide world to hide a rogue. Commit a crime, and the earth is made of glass. Commit a crime, and it seems as if a coat of snow fell on the ground, such as reveals in the woods the track of every partridge and fox and squirrel and mole. You cannot recall the spoken word, you cannot wipe out the foot-track, you cannot draw up the ladder, so as to leave no inlet or clew. Some damning circumstance always transpires. The laws and substances of nature,—water, snow, wind, gravitation,—become penalties to the thief.

37. On the other hand the law holds with

equal sureness for all right action. Love, and you shall be loved. All love is mathematically just, as much as the two sides of an algebraic equation. The good man has absolute good, which like fire turns everything to its own nature, so that you cannot do him any harm; but as the royal armies sent against Napoleon,° when he approached, cast down their colors and from enemies became friends, so do disasters of all kinds, as sickness, offense, poverty, prove benefactors:—

> "Winds blow and waters roll°
> Strength to the brave and power and deity,
> Yet in themselves are nothing."

38. The good are befriended even by weakness and defect. As no man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him, so no man had ever a defect that was not somewhere made useful to him. The stag in the fable° admired his horns and blamed his feet, but when the hunter came, his feet saved him, and afterwards, caught in the thicket, his horns destroyed him. Every man in his lifetime needs to thank his faults. As no man thoroughly understands a truth until first he has contended against it, so no man has a thorough acquaintance with the hindrances or talents of men until he has suffered from the one and seen the triumph of the other over his own want of the

same. Has he a defect of temper that unfits him to live in society? Thereby he is driven to entertain himself alone and acquire habits of self-help; and thus, like the wounded oyster, he mends his shell with pearl.

39. Our strength grows out of our weakness. The indignation which arms itself with secret forces does not awaken until we are pricked and stung and sorely assailed. A great man is always willing to be little. Whilst he sits on the cushion of advantages, he goes to sleep. When he is pushed, tormented, defeated, he has a chance to learn something; he has been put on his wits, on his manhood; he has gained facts; learns his ignorance; is cured of the insanity of conceit; has got moderation and real skill. The wise man always throws himself on the side of his assailants. It is more his interest than it is theirs to find his weak point. The wound cicatrizes and falls off from him like a dead skin and when they would triumph, lo! he has passed on invulnerable. Blame is safer than praise. I hate to be defended in a newspaper. As long as all that is said, is said against me, I feel a certain assurance of success. But as soon as honeyed words of praise are spoken for me I feel as one that lies unprotected before his enemies. In general, every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor. As the Sandwich Islander believes that the

strength and valor of the enemy he kills passes into himself, so we gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

40. The same guards which protect us from disaster, defect, and enmity, defend us, if we will, from selfishness and fraud. Bolts and bars are not the best of our institutions, nor is shrewdness in trade a mark of wisdom. Men suffer all their life long under the foolish superstition that they can be cheated. But it is as impossible for a man to be cheated by any one but himself, as for a thing to be and not to be at the same time. There is a third silent party to all our bargains. The nature and soul of things takes on itself the guaranty of the fulfillment of every contract, so that honest service cannot come to loss. If you serve an ungrateful master, serve him the more. Put God in your debt. Every stroke shall be repaid. The longer the payment is withholden, the better for you; for compound interest on compound interest is the rate and usage of this exchequer.

41. The history of persecution is a history of endeavors to cheat nature, to make water run uphill, to twist a rope of sand. It makes no difference whether the actors be many or one, a tyrant or a mob. A mob is a society of bodies voluntarily bereaving themselves of reason and traversing its work. The mob is

man voluntarily descending to the nature of the beast. Its fit hour of activity is night. Its actions are insane, like its whole constitution. It persecutes a principle; it would whip a right; it would tar and feather justice, by inflicting fire and outrage upon the houses and persons of those who have these. It resembles the prank of boys, who run with fire-engines to put out the ruddy aurora streaming to the stars. The inviolate spirit turns their spite against the wrongdoers. The martyr cannot be dishonored. Every lash inflicted is a tongue of fame; every prison a more illustrious abode; every burned book or house enlightens the world; every suppressed or expunged word reverberates through the earth from side to side. Hours of sanity and consideration are always arriving to communities, as to individuals, when the truth is seen, and the martyrs are justified.

42. Thus do all things preach the indifferency of circumstances. The man is all. Everything has two sides, a good and an evil. Every advantage has its tax. I learn to be content. But the doctrine of compensation is not the doctrine of indifferency. The thoughtless say, on hearing these representations,—What boots it to do well? there is one event to good and evil; if I gain any good I must pay for it; if I

lose any good I gain some other; all actions are indifferent.

43. There is a deeper fact in the soul than compensation, to wit, its own nature. The soul is not a compensation, but a life. The soul *is*. Under all this running sea of circumstance, whose waters ebb and flow with perfect balance, lies the aboriginal abyss of real Being. Essence, or God, is not a relation or a part, but the whole. Being is the vast affirmative, excluding negation, self-balanced, and swallowing up all relations, parts, and times within itself. Nature, truth, virtue, are the influx from thence. Vice is the absence or departure of the same. Nothing, Falsehood, may indeed stand as the great Night or shade on which as a background the living universe paints itself forth; but no fact is begotten by it; it cannot work, for it is not. It cannot work any good; it cannot work any harm. It is harm inasmuch as it is worse not to be than to be.

44. We feel defrauded of the retribution due to evil acts, because the criminal adheres to his vice and contumacy and does not come to a crisis or judgment anywhere in visible nature. There is no stunning confutation of his nonsense before men and angels. Has he therefore outwitted the law? Inasmuch as he carries the malignity and the lie with him he so far de-

creases from nature. In some manner there will be a demonstration of the wrong to the understanding also; but, should we not see it, this deadly deduction makes square the eternal account.

45. Neither can it be said, on the other hand, that the gain of rectitude must be bought by any loss. There is no penalty to virtue; no penalty to wisdom; they are proper additions of being. In a virtuous action I properly *am;* in a virtuous act I add to the world; I plant into deserts conquered from Chaos and Nothing° and see the darkness receding on the limits of the horizon. There can be no excess to love, none to knowledge, none to beauty, when these attributes are considered in the purest sense. The soul refuses limits, and always affirms an Optimism, never a Pessimism.

46. His life is a progress, and not a station. His instinct is trust. Our instinct uses "more" and "less" in application to man, always of the *presence of the soul*, and not of its absence; the brave man is greater than the coward; the true, the benevolent, the wise, is more a man and not less, than the fool and knave. There is no tax on the good of virtue, for that is the incoming of God himself, or absolute existence, without any comparative. Material good has its tax, and if it came without desert or sweat, has no root in me, and the next wind will blow

it away. But all the good of nature is the soul's, and may be had if paid for in nature's lawful coin, that is, by labor which the heart and the head allow. I no longer wish to meet a good I do not earn, for example to find a pot of buried gold, knowing that it brings with it new burdens. I do not wish more external goods,—neither possessions, nor honors, nor powers, nor persons. The gain is apparent; the tax is certain. But there is no tax on the knowledge that the compensation exists and that it is not desirable to dig up treasure. Herein I rejoice with a serene eternal peace. I contract the boundaries of possible mischief. I learn the wisdom of St. Bernard,° "Nothing can work me damage except myself; the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and never am a real sufferer but by my own fault."

47. In the nature of the soul is the compensation for the inequalities of condition. The radical tragedy of nature seems to be the distinction of More and Less. How can Less not feel the pain; how not feel indignation or malevolence towards More? Look at those who have less faculty, and one feels sad and knows not well what to make of it. He almost shuns their eye; he fears they will upbraid God. What should they do? It seems a great injustice. But see the facts nearly and these mountainous inequalities vanish. Love reduces

them as the sun melts the iceberg in the sea. The heart and soul of all men being one, this bitterness of *His* and *Mine* ceases. His is mine. I am my brother and my brother is me. If I feel overshadowed and outdone by great neighbors, I can yet love; I can still receive; and he that loveth maketh his own the grandeur he loves. Thereby I make the discovery that my brother is my guardian, acting for me with the friendliest designs, and the estate I so admired and envied is my own. It is the nature of the soul to appropriate all things. Jesus and Shakspeare are fragments of the soul, and by love I conquer and incorporate them in my own conscious domain. His virtue,—is not that mine? His wit,—if it cannot be made mine, it is not wit.

48. Such also is the natural history of calamity. The changes which break up at short intervals the prosperity of men are advertisements of a nature whose law is growth. Every soul is by this intrinsic necessity quitting its whole system of things, its friends and home and laws and faith, as the shellfish crawls° out of its beautiful but stony case, because it no longer admits of its growth, and slowly forms a new house. In proportion to the vigor of the individual these revolutions are frequent, until in some happier mind they are incessant and all worldly relations hang very loosely about

him, becoming as it were a transparent fluid membrane through which the living form is always seen, and not, as in most men, an indurated heterogeneous fabric of many dates and of no settled character, in which the man is imprisoned. Then there can be enlargement, and the man of to-day scarcely recognizes the man of yesterday. And such should be the outward biography of man in time, a putting off of dead circumstances day by day, as he renews his raiment day by day. But to us, in our lapse estate, resting, not advancing, resisting, not co-operating with the divine expansion, this growth comes by shocks.

49. We cannot part with our friends. We cannot let our angels go. We do not see that they only go out that archangels may come in. We are idolators of the old. We do not believe in the riches of the soul, in its proper eternity and omnipresence. We do not believe there is any force in to-day to rival or re-create that beautiful yesterday. We linger in the ruins of the old tent where once we had bread and shelter and organs, nor believe that the spirit can feed, cover, and nerve us again. We cannot again find aught so dear, so sweet, so graceful. But we sit and weep in vain. The voice of the Almighty saith, "Up and onward for evermore!" We cannot stay amid the ruins. Neither will we rely on the new; and so we

walk ever with reverted eyes, like those monsters who look backwards.

50. And yet the compensations of calamity are made apparent to the understanding also, after long intervals of time. A fever, a mutilation, a cruel disappointment, a loss of wealth, a loss of friends, seems at the moment unpaid loss, and unpayable. But the sure years reveal the deep remedial force that underlies all facts. The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius; for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life, terminates an epoch of infancy or of youth which was waiting to be closed, breaks up a wonted occupation, or a household, or style of living, and allows the formation of new ones more friendly to the growth of character. It permits or constrains the formation of new acquaintances and the reception of new influences that prove of the first importance to the next years; and the man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden-flower, with no room for its roots and too much sunshine for its head, by the falling of the walls and the neglect of the gardener is made the banian of the forest, yielding shade and fruit to wide neighborhoods of men.

POLITICS

1. In dealing with the State, we ought to remember that its institutions are not aboriginal, though they existed before we were born: that they are not superior to the citizen: that every one of them was once the act of a single man: every law and usage was a man's expedient to meet a particular case: that they all are imitable, all alterable; we may make as good; we may make better. Society is an illusion to the young citizen. It lies before him in rigid repose, with certain names, men, and institutions, rooted like oak trees to the centre, round which all arrange themselves the best they can. But the old statesman knows that society is fluid; there are no such roots and centres; but any particle may suddenly become the centre of the movement, and compel the system to gyrate round it, as every man of strong will, like Pisistratus,° or Cromwell,° does for a time, and every man of truth, like Plato,° or Paul, does forever. But politics rest on necessary foundations, and cannot be treated with levity. Republics abound in young civilians, who believe that the laws make the city, that grave modifications of the policy and modes

of living, and employments of the population, that commerce, education, and religion, may be voted in or out; and that any measure, though it were absurd, may be imposed on a people, if only you can get sufficient voices to make it a law. But the wise know that foolish legislation is a rope of sand, which perishes in the twisting; that the State must follow, and not lead the character and progress of the citizen; the strongest usurper is quickly got rid of; and they only who build on Ideas, build for eternity; and that the form of government which prevails, is the expression of what cultivation exists in the population which permits it. The law is only a memorandum. We are superstitious, and esteem the statute somewhat: so much life as it has in the character of living men, is its force. The statute stands there to say, yesterday we agreed so and so, but how feel ye this article to-day? Our statute is a currency which we stamp with our own portrait: it soon becomes unrecognizable, and in process of time will return to the mint. Nature is not democratic, nor limited-monarchical, but despotic, and will not be fooled or abated of any jot of her authority, by the pertest of her sons: and as fast as the public mind is opened to more intelligence, the code is seen to be brute and stammering. It speaks not articulately, and must be made to. Meantime the education

of the general mind never stops. The reveries of the true and simple are prophetic. What the tender poetic youth dreams, and prays, and paints to-day, but shuns the ridicule of saying aloud, shall presently be the resolutions of public bodies, then shall be carried as grievance and bill of rights° through conflict and war, and then shall be triumphant law and establishment for a hundred years, until it gives place, in turn, to new prayers and pictures. The history of the State sketches in coarse outline the progress of thought, and follows at a distance the delicacy of culture and of aspiration.

2. The theory of politics, which has possessed the mind of men, and which they have expressed the best they could in their laws and in their revolutions, considers persons and property as the two objects for whose protection government exists. Of persons, all have equal rights, in virtue of being identical in nature. This interest, of course, with its whole power demands a democracy. While the rights of all as persons are equal in virtue of their access to reason, their rights in property are very unequal. One man owns his clothes, and another owns a county. This accident, depending primarily on the skill and virtue of the parties, of which there is every degree, and, secondarily, on patrimony, falls unequally, and

its rights, of course, are unequal. Personal rights, universally the same, demand a government framed on the ratio of the census; property demands a government framed on the ratio of owners and of owning. Laban,° who has flocks and herds, wishes them looked after by an officer on the frontiers, lest the Midianites° shall drive them off, and pays a tax to that end. Jacob has no flocks or herds, and no fear of the Midianites, and pays no tax to the officer. It seemed fit that Laban and Jacob should have equal rights to elect the officer who is to defend their persons, but that Laban, and not Jacob, should elect the officer who is to guard the sheep and cattle. And, if question arise whether additional officers or watch-towers should be provided, must not Laban and Isaac, and those who must sell part of their herds to buy protection for the rest, judge better of this, and with more right than Jacob, who, because he is a youth and a traveler, eats their bread and not his own?

3. In the earliest society the proprietors made their own wealth, and so long as it comes to the owners in the direct way, no other opinion would arise in any equitable community, than that property should make the law for property, and persons the law for persons.

4. But property passes through donation or inheritance to those who do not create it. Gift,

in one case, makes it as really the new owner's, as labor made it the first owner's: in the other case, of patrimony, the law makes an ownership which will be valid in each man's view according to the estimate which he sets on the public tranquillity.

5. It was not, however, found easy to embody the readily admitted principle, that property should make law for property, and persons for persons, since persons and property mixed themselves in every transaction. At last it seemed settled that the rightful distinction was, that the proprietors should have more elective franchise than non-proprietors, on the Spartan principle of "calling that which is just, equal: not that which is equal, just."

6. That principle no longer looks so self-evident as it appeared in former times, partly, because doubts have arisen whether too much weight had not been allowed in the laws to property, and such a structure given to our usages, as allowed the rich to encroach on the poor, and to keep them poor; but mainly, because there is an instinctive sense, however obscure and yet inarticulate, that the whole constitution of property, on its present tenures, is injurious, and its influence on persons deteriorating and degrading; that truly, the only interest for the consideration of the State is persons; that property will always follow per-

sons; that the highest end of government is the culture of men: and if men can be educated, the institutions will share their improvement, and the moral sentiment will write the law of the land.

7. If it be not easy to settle the equity of this question, the peril is less when we take note of our natural defenses. We are kept by better guards than the vigilance of such magistrates as we commonly elect. Society always consists, in greatest part, of young and foolish persons. The old, who have seen through the hypocrisy of courts and statesmen, die, and leave no wisdom to their sons. They believe their own newspaper, as their fathers did at their age. With such an ignorant and deceivable majority, States would soon run to ruin, but that there are limitations, beyond which the folly and ambition of governors cannot go. Things have their laws, as well as men; and things refuse to be trifled with. Property will be protected. Corn will not grow, unless it is planted and manured; but the farmer will not plant or hoe it, unless the chances are a hundred to one that he will cut and harvest it. Under any forms, persons and property must and will have their just sway. They exert their power as steadily as matter its attraction. Cover up a pound of earth never so cunningly, divide and subdivide it, melt it to liquid, con-

vert it to gas; it will always weigh a pound: it will always attract and resist other matter by the full virtue of one pound weight;—and the attributes of a person, his wit and his moral energy, will exercise, under any law or extinguishing tyranny, their proper force,—if not overtly, then covertly; if not for the law, then against it; if not wholesomely, then poisonously; with right, or by might. The boundaries of personal influence it is impossible to fix, as persons are organs of moral or supernatural force. Under the dominion of an idea, which possesses the minds of multitudes, as civil freedom, or the religious sentiment, the powers of persons are no longer subjects of calculation. A nation of men unanimously bent on freedom, or conquest, can easily confound the arithmetic of statists, and achieve extravagant actions, out of all proportion to their means; as the Greeks, the Saracens,° the Swiss,° the Americans, and the French have done.

8. In like manner, to every particle of property belongs its own attractions. A cent is the representative of a certain quantity of corn or other commodity. Its value is in the necessities of the animal man. It is so much warmth, so much bread, so much water, so much land. The law may do what it will with the owner of property, its just power will still attach to the cent. The law may in a mad freak say, that all

shall have power except the owners of property: they shall have no vote. Nevertheless, by a higher law, the property will, year after year, write every statute that respects property. The non-proprietor will be the scribe of the proprietor. What the owners wish to do, the whole power of property will do, either through the law, or else in defiance of it. Of course, I speak of all the property, not merely of the great estates. When the rich are outvoted, as frequently happens, it is the joint treasury of the poor which exceeds their accumulations. Every man owns something, if it is only a cow, or a wheelbarrow, or his arms, and so has that property to dispose of.

9. The same necessity which secures the rights of person and property against the malignity or folly of the magistrate, determines the form and methods of governing, which are proper to each nation, and to its habits of thought, and nowise transferable to other states of society. In this country, we are very vain of our political institutions, which are singular in this, that they sprung, within the memory of living men, from the character and condition of the people, which they still express with sufficient fidelity,—and we ostentatiously prefer them to any other in history. They are not better, but only fitter for us. We may be wise in asserting the advantage in modern times of the

democratic form, but to other states of society, in which religion consecrated the monarchical, that and not this was expedient. Democracy is better for us, because the religious sentiment of the present time accords better with it. Born democrats, we are nowise qualified to judge of monarchy, which, to our fathers living in the monarchical idea, was also relatively right. But our institutions, though in coincidence with the spirit of the age, have not any exemption from the practical defects which have discredited other forms. Every actual State is corrupt. Good men must not obey the laws too well. What satire on government can equal the severity of censure conveyed in the word *politic*, which now for ages has signified *cunning*, intimating that the State is a trick?

10. The same benign necessity and the same practical abuse appear in the parties into which each State divides itself, of opponents and defenders of the administration of the government. Parties are also founded on instincts, and have better guides to their own humble aims than the sagacity of their leaders. They have nothing perverse in their origin, but rudely mark some real and lasting relation. We might as wisely reprove the east wind, or the frost, as a political party, whose members, for the most part, could give no account of their position, but stand for the defense of those

interests in which they find themselves. Our quarrel with them begins, when they quit this deep natural ground at the bidding of some leader, and, obeying personal considerations, throw themselves into the maintenance and defense of points nowise belonging to their system. A party is perpetually corrupted by personality. While we absolve the association from dishonesty we cannot extend the same charity to their leaders. They reap the rewards of the docility and zeal of the masses which they direct. Ordinarily our parties are parties of circumstance and not of principle; as the planting interest in conflict with the commercial; the party of capitalists, and that of operatives; parties which are identical in their moral character, and which can easily change ground with each other, in the support of many of their measures. Parties of principle, as religious sects, or the party of free-trade, of universal suffrage, of abolition of slavery, of abolition of capital punishment, degenerate into personalities, or would inspire enthusiasm. The vice of our leading parties in this country (which may be cited as a fair specimen of these societies of opinion) is, that they do not plant themselves on the deep and necessary grounds to which they are respectively entitled, but lash themselves to fury in the carrying of some local and momentary measure, nowise useful to the

TOWN-HOUSE, CONCORD

Emerson frequently lectured here (1865—) and here the Lyceum movement had its beginning.

commonwealth. Of the two great parties, which, at this hour, almost share the nation between them, I should say that one has the best cause, and the other contains the best men. The philosopher, the poet, or the religious man will, of course, wish to cast his vote with the democrat, for free-trade, for wide suffrage, for the abolition of legal cruelties in the penal code, and for facilitating in every manner the access of the young and the poor to the sources of wealth and power. But he can rarely accept the persons whom the so-called popular party proposes to him as representatives of these liberalities. They have not at heart the ends which give to the name of democracy what hope and virtue are in it. The spirit of our American radicalism is destructive and aimless; it is not loving; it has no ulterior and divine ends; but is destructive only out of hatred and selfishness. On the other side, the conservative party, composed of the most moderate, able, and cultivated part of the population, is timid, and merely defensive of property. It vindicates no right, it aspires to no real good, it brands no crime, it proposes no generous policy, it does not build, nor write, nor cherish the arts, nor foster religion, nor establish schools, nor encourage science, nor emancipate the slave, nor befriend the poor, or the Indian, or the immigrant. From neither

party, when in power, has the world any benefit to expect in science, art, or humanity at all commensurate with the resources of the nation.

11. I do not for these defects despair of our republic. We are not at the mercy of any waves of chance. In the strife of ferocious parties, human nature always finds itself cherished, as the children of the convicts at Botany Bay° are found to have as healthy a moral sentiment as other children. Citizens of feudal states are alarmed at our democratic institutions lapsing into anarchy; and the older and more cautious among ourselves are learning from Europeans to look with some terror at our turbulent freedom. It is said that in our license of construing the Constitution, and in the despotism of public opinion, we have no anchor; and one foreign observer thinks he has found the safeguard in the sanctity of Marriage among us; and another thinks he has found it in our Calvinism. Fisher Ames° expressed the popular security more wisely, when he compared a monarchy and a republic, saying, "that a monarchy is a merchantman, which sails well, but will sometimes strike on a rock, and go to the bottom; whilst a republic is a raft, which would never sink, but then your feet are always in water." No forms can have any dangerous importance, whilst we are befriended by the laws of things. It makes no difference how many tons' weight

of atmosphere presses on our heads, so long as the same pressure resists it within the lungs. Augment the mass a thousand fold, it cannot begin to crush us, as long as reaction is equal to action. The fact of two poles, of two forces, centripetal and centrifugal, is universal, and each force by its own activity develops the other. Wild liberty develops iron conscience. Want of liberty, by strengthening law and decorum, stupefies conscience. "Lynch-law°" prevails only where there is greater hardihood and self-subsistency in the leaders. A mob cannot be a permanency; everybody's interest requires that it should not exist, and only justice satisfies all.

12. We must trust infinitely to the beneficent necessity which shines through all laws. Human nature expresses itself in them as characteristically as in statues, or songs, or railroads, and an abstract of the codes of nations would be a transcript of the common conscience. Governments have their origin in the moral identity of men. Reason for one is seen to be reason for another, and for every other. There is a middle measure which satisfies all parties, be they never so many, or so resolute for their own. Every man finds a sanction for his simplest claims and deeds in decisions of his own mind, which he calls Truth and Holiness. In these decisions all the citizens find a

perfect agreement, and only in these; not in what is good to eat, good to wear, good use of time, or what amount of land, or of public aid, each is entitled to claim. This truth and justice men presently endeavor to make application of, to the measuring of land, the apportionment of service, the protection of life and property. Their first endeavors, no doubt, are very awkward. Yet absolute right is the first governor; or, every government is an impure theocracy. The idea, after which each community is aiming to make and mend its law, is the will of the wise man. The wise man, it cannot find in nature, and it makes awkward but earnest efforts to secure his government by contrivance; as, by causing the entire people to give their voices on every measure; or, by a double choice to get the representation of the whole; or, by a selection of the best citizens; or, to secure the advantages of efficiency and internal peace, by confiding the government to one, who may himself select his agents. All forms of government symbolize an immortal government, common to all dynasties and independent of numbers, perfect where two men exist, perfect where there is only one man.

13. Every man's nature is a sufficient advertisement to him of the character of his fellows. My right and my wrong is their right and their wrong. While I do what is fit for me, and

abstain from what is unfit, my neighbor and I shall often agree in our means, and work together for a time to one end. But whenever I find my dominion over myself not sufficient for me, and undertake the direction of him also, I overstep the truth, and come into false relations to him. I may have so much more skill or strength than he, that he cannot express adequately his sense of wrong, but it is a lie, and hurts like a lie both him and me. Love and nature cannot maintain the assumption: it must be executed by a practical lie, namely, by force. This undertaking for another, is the blunder which stands in colossal ugliness in the governments of the world. It is the same thing in numbers as in a pair, only not quite so intelligible. I can see well enough a great difference between my setting myself down to a self-control, and my going to make somebody else act after my views: but when a quarter of the human race assume to tell me what I must do, I may be too much disturbed by the circumstances to see so clearly the absurdity of their command. Therefore, all public ends look vague and quixotic° beside private ones. For, any laws but those which men make for themselves are laughable. If I put myself in the place of my child, and we stand in one thought, and see that things are thus or thus, that perception is law for him and me. We are both

there, both act. But if, without carrying him into the thought, I look over into his plot, and, guessing how it is with him, ordain this or that, he will never obey me. This is the history of governments,—one man does something which is to bind another. A man who cannot be acquainted with me, taxes me; looking from afar at me, ordains that a part of my labor shall go to this or that whimsical end, not as I, but as he happens to fancy. Behold the consequence. Of all debts, men are least willing to pay the taxes. What a satire is this on government! Everywhere they think they get their money's worth, except for these.

14. Hence, the less government we have, the better,—the fewer laws, and the less confided power. The antidote to this abuse of formal government is the influence of private character, the growth of the Individual; the appearance of the principal to supersede the proxy; the appearance of the wise man, of whom the existing government is, it must be owned, but a shabby imitation. That which all things tend to educe, which freedom, cultivation, intercourse, revolutions, go to form and deliver, is character; that is the end of nature, to reach unto this coronation of her king. To educate the wise man, the State exists; and with the appearance of the wise man, the State expires. The appearance of character makes the

State unnecessary. The wise man is the State. He needs no army, fort, or navy,—he loves men too well; no bribe, or feast, or palace, to draw friends to him; no vantage ground, no favorable circumstance. He needs no library, for he has not done thinking; no church, for he is a prophet; no statute book, for he is the lawgiver; no money, for he is value; no road, for he is at home where he is; no experience, for the life of the creator shoots through him, and looks from his eyes. He has no personal friends, for he who has the spell to draw the prayer and piety of all men unto him, needs not husband and educate a few, to share with him a select and poetic life. His relation to men is angelic; his memory is myrrh° to them; his presence, frankincense° and flowers.

15. We think our civilization near its meridian, but we are yet only at the cock-crowing and the morning star. In our barbarous society the influence of character is in its infancy. As a political power, as the rightful lord who is to tumble all rulers from their chairs, its presence is hardly yet suspected. Malthus° and Ricardo° quite omit it; the Annual Register° is silent; in the Conversations' Lexicon,° it is not set down; the President's Message, the Queen's Speech, have not mentioned it; and yet it is never nothing. Every thought which genius and piety throw into the world, alters

the world. The gladiators in the lists of power feel, through all their frocks of force and simulation, the presence of worth. I think the very strife of trade and ambition are confession of this divinity; and successes in those fields are the poor amends, the fig-leaf with which the shamed soul attempts to hide its nakedness. I find the like unwilling homage in all quarters. It is because we know how much is due from us, that we are impatient to show some petty talent as a substitute for worth. We are haunted by a conscience of this right to grandeur of character, and are false to it. But each of us has some talent, can do somewhat useful, or graceful, or formidable, or amusing, or lucrative. That we do, as an apology to others and to ourselves, for not reaching the mark of a good and equal life. But it does not satisfy *us*, while we thrust it on the notice of our companions. It may throw dust in their eyes, but does not smooth our own brow, or give us the tranquillity of the strong when we walk abroad. We do penance as we go. Our talent is a sort of expiation, and we are constrained to reflect on our splendid moment, with a certain humiliation, as somewhat too fine, and not as one act of many acts, a fair expression of our permanent energy. Most persons of ability meet in society with a kind of tacit appeal. Each seems to say, "I am not all here." Sena-

tors and presidents have climbed so high with pain enough, not because they think the place specially agreeable, but as an apology for real worth, and to vindicate their manhood in our eyes. This conspicuous chair is their compensation to themselves for being of a poor, cold, hard nature. They must do what they can. Like one class of forest animals, they have nothing but a prehensile tail: climb they must, or crawl. If a man found himself so rich-natured that he could enter into strict relations with the best persons, and make life serene around him by the dignity and sweetness of his behavior, could he afford to circumvent the favor of the caucus and the press, and covet relations so hollow and pompous, as those of a politician? Surely nobody would be a charlatan, who could afford to be sincere.

16. The tendencies of the times favor the idea of self-government, and leave the individual, for all code, to the rewards and penalties of his own constitution, which work with more energy than we believe, while we depend on artificial restraints. The movement in this direction has been very marked in modern history. Much has been blind and discreditable, but the nature of the revolution is not affected by the vices of the revolters; for this is a purely moral force. It was never adopted by any party in history, neither can be. It separates the indi-

vidual from all party, and unites him, at the same time, to the race. It promises a recognition of higher rights than those of personal freedom, or the security of property. A man has a right to be employed, to be trusted, to be loved, to be revered. The power of love, as the basis of a State, has never been tried. We must not imagine that all things are lapsing into confusion, if every tender protestant be not compelled to bear his part in certain social conventions: nor doubt that roads can be built, letters carried and the fruit of labor secured, when the government of force is at an end. Are our methods now so excellent that all competition is hopeless? Could not a nation of friends even devise better ways? On the other hand, let not the most conservative and timid fear anything from a premature surrender of the bayonet, and the system of force. For, according to the order of nature, which is quite superior to our will, it stands thus: there will always be a government of force, where men are selfish; and when they are pure enough to abjure the code of force, they will be wise enough to see how these public ends of the post-office, of the highway, of commerce, and the exchange of property, of museums and libraries, of institutions of art and science, can be answered.

17. We live in a very low state of the world,

and pay unwilling tribute to governments founded on force. There is not, among the most religious and instructed men of the most religious and civil nations, a reliance on the moral sentiment, and a sufficient belief in the unity of things, to persuade them that society can be maintained without artificial restraints, as well as the solar system; or that the private citizen might be reasonable, and a good neighbor, without the hint of a jail or a confiscation. What is strange, too, there never was in any man sufficient faith in the power of rectitude, to inspire him with the broad design of renovating the State on the principle of right and love. All those who have pretended this design have been partial reformers, and have admitted in some manner the supremacy of the bad State. I do not call to mind a single human being who has steadily denied the authority of the laws, on the simple ground of his own moral nature. Such designs, full of genius and full of fate as they are, are not entertained except avowedly as air-pictures. If the individual who exhibits them dare to think them practicable, he disgusts scholars and churchmen; and men of talent, and women of superior sentiment, cannot hide their contempt. Not the less does nature continue to fill the heart of youth with suggestions of this enthusiasm, and there are now men,—if indeed I can speak in

the plural number,—more exactly, I will say, I have just been conversing with one man, to whom no weight of adverse experience will make it for a moment appear impossible, that thousands of human beings might exercise toward each other the grandest and simplest sentiments, as well as a knot of friends, or a pair of lovers.

SHAKSPEARE; OR, THE POET

1. Great men are more distinguished by range and extent, than by originality. If we require the originality which consists in weaving, like a spider, their web from their own bowels; in finding clay, and making bricks, and building the house; no great men are original. Nor does valuable originality consist in unlikeness to other men. The hero is in the press of knights, and the thick of events; and, seeing what men want, and sharing their desire, he adds the needful length of sight and of arm, to come at the desired point. The greatest genius is the most indebted man. A poet is no rattle-brain, saying what comes uppermost, and, because he says everything, saying, at last, something good; but a heart in unison with his time and country. There is nothing whimsical and fantastic in his production, but sweet and sad, earnest, freighted with the weightiest convictions, and pointed with the most determined aim which any man or class knows of in his times.

2. The Genius of our life is jealous of individuals, and will not have any individual great, except through the general. There is no choice

to genius. A great man does not wake up on some fine morning, and say, "I am full of life, I will go to sea, and find an Antarctic continent: to-day I will square the circle: I will ransack botany, and find a new food for man: I have a new architecture in my mind: I foresee a new mechanic power:" no, but he finds himself in the river of the thoughts and events, forced onward by the ideas and necessities of his contemporaries. He stands where all the eyes of men look one way, and their hands all point in the direction in which he should go. The church has reared him amidst rites and pomps, and he carries out the advice which her music gave him, and builds a cathedral needed by her chants and processions. He finds a war raging: it educates him, by trumpet, in barracks, and he betters the instruction. He finds two counties groping to bring coal, or flour, or fish, from the place of production to the place of consumption, and he hits on a railroad. Every master has found his materials collected, and his power lay in his sympathy with his people, and in his love of the materials he wrought in. What an economy of power! and what a compensation for the shortness of life! All is done to his hand. The world has brought him thus far on his way. The human race has gone out before him, sunk the hills, filled the hollows, and bridged the rivers. Men,

nations, poets, artisans, women, all have worked for him, and he enters into their labors. Choose any other thing, out of the line of tendency, out of the national feeling and history, and he would have all to do for himself: his powers would be expended in the first preparations. Great genial power, one would almost say, consists in not being original at all; in being altogether receptive; in letting the world do all, and suffering the spirit of the hour to pass unobstructed through the mind.

3. Shakspeare's youth fell in a time when the English people were importunate for dramatic entertainments. The court took offense easily at political allusions, and attempted to suppress them. The Puritans,° a growing and energetic party, and the religious among the Anglican Church,° would suppress them. But the people wanted them. Inn-yards, houses without roofs, and extemporaneous inclosures at country fairs, were the ready theaters of strolling players. The people had tasted this new joy; and, as we could not hope to suppress newspapers now,—no, not by the strongest party,—neither then could king, prelate, or puritan,—alone or united, suppress an organ, which was ballad, epic, newspaper, caucus, lecture, Punch,° and library, at the same time. Probably king, prelate, and puritan, all found their own account in it. It had become, by all

causes, a national interest,—by no means conspicuous, so that some great scholar would have thought of treating it in an English history,—but not a whit less considerable, because it was cheap, and of no account, like a baker's-shop. The best proof of its vitality is the crowd of writers which suddenly broke into this field; Kyd, Marlow, Greene, Jonson, Chapman, Dekker, Webster, Heywood, Middleton, Peele, Ford, Massinger, Beaumont, and Fletcher.°

4. The secure possession, by the stage, of the public mind, is of the first importance to the poet who works for it. He loses no time in idle experiments. Here is audience and expectation prepared. In the case of Shakspeare there is much more. At the time when he left Stratford,° and went up to London, a great body of stage-plays, of all dates and writers, existed in manuscript, and were in turn produced on the boards. Here is the Tale of Troy,° which the audience will bear hearing some part of, every week; the Death of Julius Cæsar, and other stories out of Plutarch,° which they never tire of; a shelf full of English history, from the chronicles of Brut° and Arthur,° down to the royal Henries,° which men hear eagerly; and a string of doleful tragedies, merry Italian tales, and Spanish voyages, which all the London prentices know. All the mass has been

treated with more or less skill, by every playwright, and the prompter has the soiled and tattered manuscripts. It is now no longer possible to say who wrote them first. They have been the property of the Theater so long, and so many rising geniuses have enlarged or altered them, inserting a speech, or a whole scene, or adding a song, that no man can any longer claim copyright° in this work of numbers. Happily, no man wishes to. They are not yet desired in that way. We have few readers, many spectators and hearers. They had best lie where they are.

5. Shakspeare, in common with his comrades, esteemed the mass of old plays, waste stock, in which any experiment could be freely tried. Had the *prestige* which hedges about a modern tragedy existed, nothing could have been done. The rude warm blood of the living England circulated in the play, as in street-ballads, and gave body which he wanted to his airy and majestic fancy. The poet needs a ground in popular tradition on which he may work, and which, again, may restrain his art within the due temperance. It holds him to the people, supplies a foundation for his edifice; and, in furnishing so much work done to his hand, leaves him at leisure, and in full strength for the audacities of his imagination. In short, the poet owes to his legend what sculpture

owed to the temple. Sculpture in Egypt, and in Greece, grew up in subordination to architecture. It was the ornament of the temple wall: at first, a rude relief carved on pediments, then the relief became bolder, and a head or arm was projected from the wall, the groups being still arranged with reference to the building, which serves also as a frame to hold the figures; and when, at last, the greatest freedom of style and treatment was reached, the prevailing genius of architecture still enforced a certain calmness and continence in the statue. As soon as the statue was begun for itself, and with no reference to the temple or palace, the art began to decline: freak, extravagance, and exhibition took the place of the old temperance. This balance-wheel, which the sculptor found in architecture, the perilous irritability of poetic talent found in the accumulated dramatic materials to which the people were already wonted, and which had a certain excellence which no single genius, however extraordinary, could hope to create.

6. In point of fact, it appears that Shakspeare did owe debts in all directions, and was able to use whatever he found; and the amount of indebtedness may be inferred from Malone's° laborious computations in regard to the First, Second, and Third parts of Henry VI., in which, "out of 6043 lines, 1771 were

written by some author preceding Shakspeare; 2373 by him, on the foundation laid by his predecessors; and 1899 were entirely his own." And the proceeding investigation hardly leaves a single drama of his absolute invention. Malone's sentence is an important piece of external history. In Henry VIII., I think I see plainly the cropping out of the original rock on which his own finer stratum was laid. The first play was written by a superior, thoughtful man, with a vicious ear. I can mark his lines, and know well their cadence. See Wolsey's soliloquy,° and the following scene with Cromwell,° where, instead of the metre of Shakspeare, whose secret is, that the thought constructs the tune, so that reading for the sense will best bring out the rhythm,—here the lines are constructed on a given tune, and the verse has even a trace of pulpit eloquence. But the play contains, through all its length, unmistakable traits of Shakspeare's hand, and some passages, as the account of the coronation,° are like autographs. What is odd, the compliment to Queen Elizabeth° is in the bad rhythm.

7. Shakspeare knew that tradition supplies a better fable than any invention can. If he lost any credit of design, he augmented his resources; and, at that day, our petulant demand for originality was not so much pressed. There

was no literature for the million. The universal reading, the cheap press, were unknown. A great poet, who appears in illiterate times, absorbs into his sphere all the light which is anywhere radiating. Every intellectual jewel, every flower of sentiment, it is his fine office to bring to his people; and he comes to value his memory equally with his invention. He is therefore little solicitous whence his thoughts have been derived; whether through translation, whether through tradition, whether by travel in distant countries, whether by inspiration; from whatever source, they are equally welcome to his uncritical audience. Nay, he borrows very near home. Other men say wise things as well as he; only they say a good many foolish things, and do not now when they have spoken wisely. He knows the sparkle of the true stone, and puts it in high place, wherever he finds it. Such is the happy position of Homer,° perhaps; of Chaucer,° of Saadi.° They felt that all wit was their wit. And they are librarians and historiographers, as well as poets. Each romancer was heir and dispenser of all the hundred tales of the world,—

> "Presenting Thebes' and Pelops' line
> And the tale of Troy divine.°"

The influence of Chaucer is conspicuous in all our early literature; and, more recently, not

only Pope° and Dryden° have been beholden to him, but, in the whole society of English writers, a large unacknowledged debt is easily traced. One is charmed with the opulence which feeds so many pensioners. But Chaucer is a huge borrower. Chaucer, it seems, drew continually, through Lydgate° and Caxton,° from Guido di Colonna,° whose Latin romance of the Trojan war was in turn a compilation from Dares Phrygius,° Ovid,° and Statius.° Then Petrarch,° Boccaccio,° and the Provençal poets° are his benefactors: the Romaunt of the Rose is only judicious translation from William of Lorris° and John of Meung°: Troilus and Creseide,° from Lollius of Urbino°: The Cock and the Fox,° from the *Lais* of Marie°: The House of Fame,° from the French or Italian: and poor Gower° he uses as if he were only a brick-kiln or stone-quarry, out of which to build his house. He steals by this apology,—that what he takes has no worth where he finds it, and the greatest where he leaves it. It has come to be practically a sort of rule in literature, that a man, having once shown himself capable of original writing, is entitled thenceforth to steal from the writings of others at discretion. Thought is the property of him who can entertain it; and of him who can adequately place it. A certain awkwardness marks the use of borrowed thoughts;

but, as soon as we have learned what to do with them, they become our own.

8. Thus all originality is relative. Every thinker is retrospective. The learned member of the legislature, at Westminster, or at Washington, speaks and votes for thousands. Show us the constituency, and the now invisible channels by which the senator is made aware of their wishes, the crowd of practical and knowing men, who, by correspondence or conversation, are feeding him with evidence, anecdotes, and estimates, and it will bereave his fine attitude and resistance of something of their impressiveness. As Sir Robert Peel° and Mr. Webster° vote, so Locke° and Rousseau° think for thousands; and so there were fountains all around Homer, Menu,° Saadi, or Milton, from which they drew; friends, lovers, books, traditions, proverbs,—all perished,—which, if seen, would go to reduce the wonder. Did the bard speak with authority? Did he feel himself overmatched by any companion? The appeal is to the consciousness of the writer. Is there at last in his breast a Delphi° whereof to ask concerning any thought or thing, whether it be verily so, yea or nay? and to have answer, and to rely on that? All the debts which such a man could contract to other wit, would never disturb his consciousness of originality: for the ministrations of books, and

of other minds, are a whiff of smoke to that most private reality with which he has conversed.

9. It is easy to see that what is best written or done by genius, in the world, was no man's work, but came by wide social labor, when a thousand wrought like one, sharing the same impulse. Our English Bible is a wonderful specimen of the strength and music of the English language. But it was not made by one man, or at one time; but centuries and churches brought it to perfection. There never was a time when there was not some translation existing. The Liturgy,° admired for its energy and pathos, is an anthology of the piety of ages and nations, a translation of the prayers and forms of the Catholic church,—these collected, too, in long periods, from the prayers and meditations of every saint and sacred writer, all over the world. Grotius° makes the like remark in respect to the Lord's Prayer, that the single clauses of which it is composed were already in use, in the time of Christ, in the rabbinical forms. He picked out the grains of gold. The nervous language of the Common Law, the impressive forms of our courts, and the precision and substantial truth of the legal distinctions, are the contribution of all the sharp-sighted, strong-minded men who have lived in the countries where these laws govern.

The translation of Plutarch gets its excellence by being translation on translation. There never was a time when there was none. All the truly idiomatic and national phrases are kept, and all others successively picked out, and thrown away. Something like the same process had gone on, long before, with the originals of these books. The world takes liberties with world-books. Vedas,° Æsop's Fables,° Pilpay,° Arabian Nights,° Cid,° Iliad,° Robin Hood,° Scottish Minstrelsy,° are not the work of single men. In the composition of such works, the time thinks, the market thinks, the mason, the carpenter, the merchant, the farmer, the fop, all think for us. Every book supplies its time with one good word; every municipal law, every trade, every folly of the day, and the generic catholic genius who is not afraid or ashamed to owe his originality to the originality of all, stands with the next age as the recorder and embodiment of his own.

10. We have to thank the researches of antiquaries, and the Shakspeare Society,° for ascertaining the steps of the English drama, from the Mysteries° celebrated in churches and by churchmen, and the final detachment from the church, and the completion of secular plays, from Ferrex and Porrex,° and Gammer Gurton's Needle,° down to the possession of the

stage by the very pieces which Shakspeare altered, remodelled, and finally made his own. Elated with success, and piqued by the growing interest of the problem, they have left no book-stall unsearched, no chest in a garret unopened, no file of old yellow accounts to decompose in damp and worms, so keen was the hope to discover whether the boy Shakspeare poached or not, whether he held horses at the theatre door, whether he kept school, and why he left in his will only his second-best bed to Ann Hathaway, his wife.

11. There is somewhat touching in the madness with which the passing age mischooses the object on which all candles shine, and all eyes are turned; the care with which it registers every trifle touching Queen Elizabeth,° and King James,° and the Essexes, Leicesters, Burleighs, and Buckinghams°; and lets pass without a single valuable note the founder of another dynasty, which alone will cause the Tudor dynasty to be remembered,—the man who carries the Saxon race in him by the inspiration which feeds him, and on whose thoughts the foremost people of the world are now for some ages to be nourished, and minds to receive this and not another bias. A popular player,—nobody suspected he was the poet of the human race; and the secret was kept as faithfully from poets and intellectual

men, as from courtiers and frivolous people. Bacon,° who took the inventory of the human understanding for his times, never mentioned his name. Ben Jonson,° though we have strained his few words of regard and panegyric,° had no suspicion of the elastic fame whose first vibrations he was attempting. He no doubt thought the praise he has conceded to him generous, and esteemed himself, out of all question, the better poet of the two.

12. If it need wit to know wit, according to the proverb, Shakspeare's time should be capable of recognizing it. Sir Henry Wotton was born four years after Shakspeare, and died twenty-three years after him; and I find, among his correspondents and acquaintances, the following persons: Theodore Beza,° Isaac Casaubon,° Sir Philip Sidney,° Earl of Essex, Lord Bacon, Sir Walter Raleigh,° John Milton, Sir Henry Vane,° Isaac Walton,° Dr. Donne,° Abraham Cowley,° Bellarmine,° Charles Cotton,° John Pym,° John Hales,° Kepler,° Vieta,° Albericus Gentilis,° Paul Sarpi,° Arminius°; with all of whom exists some token of his having communicated, without enumerating many others, whom doubtless he saw,—Shakspeare, Spenser,° Jonson, Beaumont,° Massinger,° two Herberts,° Marlow,° Chapman,° and the rest. Since the constellation of great men who appeared in Greece in the time

of Pericles,° there was never any such society; —yet their genius failed them to find out the best head in the universe. Our poet's mask was impenetrable. You cannot see the mountain near. It took a century to make it suspected; and not until two centuries had passed, after his death, did any criticism which we think adequate begin to appear. It was not possible to write the history of Shakspeare till now; for he is the father of German literature: it was on the introduction of Shakspeare into German, by Lessing,° and the translation of his works by Wieland° and Schlegel,° that the rapid burst of German literature was most intimately connected. It was not until the nineteenth century, whose speculative genius is a sort of living Hamlet,° that the tragedy of Hamlet could find such wondering readers. Now, literature, philosophy, and thought, are Shakspearized. His mind is the horizon beyond which, at present, we do not see. Our ears are educated to music by his rhythm. Coleridge° and Goethe° are the only critics who have expressed our convictions with any adequate fidelity; but there is in all cultivated minds a silent appreciation of his superlative power and beauty, which, like Christianity, qualifies the period.

14. The Shakspeare Society have inquired in all directions, advertised the missing facts,

offered money for any information that will lead to proof; and with what result? Beside some important illustration of the history of the English stage, to which I have adverted, they have gleaned a few facts touching the property, and dealings in regard to property, of the poet. It appears that, from year to year, he owned a larger share in the Blackfriars' Theatre°: its wardrobe and other appurtenances were his: that he bought an estate in his native village, with his earnings, as writer and shareholder; that he lived in the best house in Stratford; was intrusted by his neighbors with their commissions in London, as of borrowing money, and the like; that he was a veritable farmer. About the time when he was writing Macbeth,° he sues Philip Rogers, in the borough-court of Stratford for thirty-five shillings, ten pence, for corn delivered to him at different times; and, in all respects, appears as a good husband, with no reputation for eccentricity or excess. He was a good-natured sort of man, an actor and shareholder in the theatre, not in any striking manner distinguished from other actors and managers. I admit the importance of this information. It is well worth the pains that have been taken to procure it.

15. But whatever scraps of information concerning his condition these researches may

SHAKESPEARE RECITING BEFORE QUEEN ELIZABETH
From the painting by Thomas Stothard

have rescued, they can shed no light upon that infinite invention which is the concealed magnet of his attraction for us. We are very clumsy writers of history. We tell the chronicle of parentage, birth, birth-place, schooling, schoolmates, earning of money, marriage, publication of books, celebrity, death; and when we have come to an end of this gossip, no ray of relation appears between it and the goddess-born; and it seems as if, had we dipped at random into the "Modern Plutarch," and read any other life there, it would have fitted the poems as well. It is the essence of poetry to spring, like the rainbow daughter of Wonder, from the invisible, to abolish the past, and refuse all history. Malone, Warburton,° Dyce,° and Collier,° have wasted their oil. The famed theatres, Covent Garden,° Drury Lane, the Park, and Tremont, have vainly assisted. Betterton,° Garrick, Kemble, Kean, and Macready, dedicate their lives to this genius; him they crown, elucidate, obey, and express. The genius knows them not. The recitation begins; one golden word leaps out immortal from all this painted pedantry, and sweetly torments us with invitations to its own inaccessible homes. I remember, I went once to see the Hamlet of a famed performer, the pride of the English stage; and all I then heard, and all I now remember, of the tragedian, was that

in which the tragedian had no part; simply, Hamlet's question to the ghost,—

> "What may this mean,
> That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
> Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon?°"

That imagination which dilates the closet he writes in to the world's dimension, crowds it with agents in rank and order, as quickly reduces the big reality to be the glimpses of the moon. These tricks of his magic spoil for us the illusions of the green-room. Can any biography shed light on the localities into which the *Midsummer Night's Dream* admits me? Did Shakspeare confide to any notary or parish recorder, sacristan, or surrogate, in Stratford, the genesis of that delicate creation? The forest of Arden,° the nimble air of Scone Castle,° the moonlight of Portia's villa,° "the antres vast and desarts idle," ° of Othello's captivity,—where is the third cousin, or grandnephew, the chancellor's file of accounts, or private letter, that has kept one word of those transcendent secrets? In fine, in this drama, as in all great works of art,—in the Cyclopean architecture of Egypt and India°; in the Phidian sculpture°; the Gothic minsters°; the Italian painting; the Ballads of Spain and Scotland,—the Genius draws up the ladder after him, when the creative age goes up to

heaven, and gives way to a new age, which sees the works, and asks in vain for a history.

16. Shakspeare is the only biographer of Shakspeare; and even he can tell nothing, except to the Shakspeare in us; that is, to our most apprehensive and sympathetic hour. He cannot step from off his tripod, and give us anecdotes of his inspirations. Read the antique documents extricated, analyzed, and compared by the assiduous Dyce and Collier; and now read one of those skyey sentences,—aërolites,—which seem to have fallen out of heaven, and which, not your experience, but the man within the breast, has accepted as words of fate; and tell me if they match; if the former account in any manner for the latter; or which gives the most historical insight into the man.

17. Hence, though our external history is so meagre, yet, with Shakspeare for biographer, instead of Aubrey° and Rowe,° we have really the information which is material, that which describes character and fortune, that which, if we were about to meet the man and deal with him, would most import us to know. We have his recorded convictions on those questions which knock for answer at every heart,—on life and death, on love, on wealth and poverty, on the prizes of life, and the ways whereby we come at them; on the characters

of men, and the influences, occult and open, which affect their fortunes; and on those mysterious and demoniacal powers which defy our science, and which yet interweave their malice and their gift in our brightest hours. Who ever read the volume of the Sonnets, without finding that the poet had there revealed, under masks that are no masks to the intelligent, the lore of friendship and love; the confusion of sentiments in the most susceptible, and, at the same time, the most intellectual of men? What trait of his private mind has he hidden in his dramas? One can discern, in his ample pictures of the gentleman and the king, what forms and humanities pleased him; his delight in troops of friends, in large hospitality, in cheerful giving. Let Timon,° let Warwick,° let Antonio° the merchant, answer for his great heart. So far from Shakspeare's being the least known, he is the one person, in all modern history, known to us. What point of morals, of manners, of economy, of philosophy, of religion, of taste, of the conduct of life, has he not settled? What mystery has he not signified his knowledge of? What office, or function, or district of man's work, has he not remembered? What king has he not taught state, as Talma° taught Napoleon? What maiden has not found him finer than her delicacy? What lover has he not outloved? What sage has he

not outseen? What gentleman has he not instructed in the rudeness of his behavior?

18. Some able and appreciating critics think no criticism on Shakspeare valuable, that does not rest purely on the dramatic merit; that he is falsely judged as poet and philosopher. I think as highly as these critics of his dramatic merit, but still think it secondary. He was a full man, who liked to talk; a brain exhaling thoughts and images, which, seeking vent, found the drama next at hand. Had he been less, we should have had to consider how well he filled his place, how good a dramatist he was,—and he is the best in the world. But it turns out, that what he has to say is of that weight as to withdraw some attention from the vehicle; and he is like some saint whose history is to be rendered into all languages, into verse and prose, into songs and pictures, and cut up into proverbs; so that the occasion which gave the saint's meaning the form of a conversation, or of a prayer, or of a code of laws, is immaterial, compared with the universality of its application. So it fares with the wise Shakspeare and his book of life. He wrote the airs for all our modern music: he wrote the text of modern life; the text of manners: he drew the man of England and Europe; the father of the man in America: he drew the man, and described the day, and what is done

in it: he read the hearts of men and women, their probity, and their second thought, and wiles; the wiles of innocence, and the transitions by which virtues and vices slide into their contraries: he could divide the mother's part from the father's part in the face of the child, or draw the fine demarcations of freedom and of fate: he knew the laws of repression which make the police of nature: and all the sweets and all the terrors of human lot lay in his mind as truly but as softly as the landscape lies on the eye. And the importance of this wisdom of life sinks the form, as of Drama or Epic, out of notice. 'Tis like making a question concerning the paper on which a king's message is written.

19. Shakspeare is as much out of the category of eminent authors, as he is out of the crowd. He is inconceivably wise; the others, conceivably. A good reader can, in a sort, nestle into Plato's° brain, and think from thence; but not into Shakspeare's. We are still out of doors. For executive faculty, for creation, Shakspeare is unique. No man can imagine it better. He was the farthest reach of subtlety compatible with an individual self, —the subtilest of authors, and only just within the possibility of authorship. With this wisdom of life, is the equal endowment of imaginative and of lyric power. He clothed the

creatures of his legend with form and sentiments, as if they were people who had lived under his roof; and few real men have left such distinct characters as these fictions. And they spoke in language as sweet as it was fit. Yet his talents never seduced him into an ostentation, nor did he harp on one string. An omnipresent humanity co-ordinates all his faculties. Give a man of talents a story to tell, and his partiality will presently appear. He has certain observations, opinions, topics, which have some accidental prominence, and which he disposes all to exhibit. He crams this part, and starves that other part, consulting not the fitness of the thing, but his fitness and strength. But Shakspeare has no peculiarity, no importunate topic; but all is duly given; no veins, no curiosities; no cow-painter, no bird-fancier, no mannerist is he: he has no discoverable egotism: the great he tells greatly; the small, subordinately. He is wise without emphasis or assertion; he is strong, as nature is strong, who lifts the land into mountain slopes without effort, and by the same rule as she floats a bubble in the air, and likes as well to do the one as the other. This makes that equality of power in farce, tragedy, narrative, and love-songs; a merit so incessant, that each reader is incredulous of the perception of other readers.

20. This power of expression, or of transferring the inmost truth of things into music and verse, makes him the type of the poet, and has added a new problem to metaphysics. This is that which throws him into natural history, as a main production of the globe, and as announcing new eras and ameliorations. Things were mirrored in his poetry without loss or blur; he could paint the fine with precision, the great with compass; the tragic and the comic indifferently, and without any distortion or favor. He carried his powerful execution into minute details, to a hair point; finishes an eyelash or a dimple as firmly as he draws a mountain; and yet these, like nature's, will bear the scrutiny of the solar microscope.

21. In short, he is the chief example to prove that more or less of production, more or fewer pictures, is a thing indifferent. He had the power to make one picture. Daguerre° learned how to let one flower etch its image on his plate of iodine; and then proceeds at leisure to etch a million. There are always objects; but there was never representation. Here is perfect representation, at last; and now let the world of figures sit for their portraits. No recipe can be given for the making of a Shakspeare; but the possibility of the translation of things into song is demonstrated.

22. His lyric power lies in the genius of the

piece. The sonnets, though their excellence is lost in the splendor of the dramas, are as inimitable as they; and it is not a merit of lines, but a total merit of the piece; like the tone of voice of some incomparable person, so is this a speech of poetic beings, and any clause as unproducible now as a whole poem.

23. Though the speeches in the plays, and single lines, have a beauty which tempts the ear to pause on them for their euphuism, yet the sentence is so loaded with meaning, and so linked with its foregoers and followers, that the logician is satisfied. His means are as admirable as his ends; every subordinate invention, by which he helps himself to connect some irreconcilable opposites, is a poem too. He is not reduced to dismount and walk, because his horses are running off with him in some distant direction: he always rides.

24. The finest poetry was first experienced: but the thought has suffered a transformation since it was an experience. Cultivated men often attain a good degree of skill in writing verses; but it is easy to read, through their poems, their personal history: any one acquainted with parties can name every figure: this is Andrew, and that is Rachael. The sense thus remains prosaic. It is a caterpillar with wings, and not yet a butterfly. In the poet's mind, the fact has gone quite over into the new

element of thought, and has lost all that is exuvial. This generosity abides with Shakspeare. We say, from the truth and closeness of his pictures, that he knows the lesson by heart. Yet there is not a trace of egotism.

25. One more royal trait properly belongs to the poet. I mean his cheerfulness, without which no man can be a poet,—for beauty is his aim. He loves virtue, not for its obligation, but for its grace: he delights in the world, in man, in woman, for the lovely light that sparkles from them. Beauty, the spirit of joy and hilarity, he sheds over the universe. Epicurus° relates, that poetry hath such charms that a lover might forsake his mistress to partake of them. And the true bards have been noted for their firm and cheerful temper. Homer lies in sunshine; Chaucer is glad and erect; and Saadi says, "It was rumored abroad that I was penitent; but what had I to do with repentance?" Not less sovereign and cheerful,—much more sovereign and cheerful, is the tone of Shakspeare. His name suggests joy and emancipation to the heart of men. If he should appear in any company of human souls, who would not march in his troop? He touches nothing that does not borrow health and longevity from his festal style.

26. And now, how stands the account of man with this bard and benefactor, when in

solitude, shutting our ears to the reverberations of his fame, we seek to strike the balance? Solitude has austere lessons; it can teach us to spare both heroes and poets; and it weighs Shakspeare also, and finds him to share the halfness and imperfection of humanity.

27. Shakspeare, Homer, Dante, Chaucer, saw the splendor of meaning that plays over the visible world; knew that a tree had another use than for apples, and corn another than for meal, and the ball of the earth, than for tillage and roads: that these things bore a second and finer harvest to the mind, being emblems of its thoughts, and conveying in all their natural history a certain mute commentary on human life. Shakspeare employed them as colors to compose his picture. He rested in their beauty; and never took the step which seemed inevitable to such genius, namely, to explore the virtue which resides in these symbols, and imparts this power,—what is that which they themselves say? He converted the elements, which waited on his command, into entertainments. He was master of the revels to mankind. Is it not as if one should have, through majestic powers of science, the comets given into his hand, or the planets and their moons, and should draw them from their orbits to glare with the municipal fireworks on a holiday night, and advertise in all towns, "very

superior pyrotechny this evening!" Are the agents of nature, and the power to understand them, worth no more than a street serenade, or the breath of a cigar? One remembers again the trumpet-text in the Koran,°—"The heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, think ye we have created them in jest?" As long as the question is of talent and mental power, the world of men has not his equal to show. But when the question is to life, and its materials, and its auxiliaries, how does he profit me? What does it signify? It is but a *Twelfth Night,* or *Midsummer Night's Dream,* or a *Winter Evening's Tale*°: what signifies another picture more or less? The Egyptian verdict of the Shakspeare Societies° comes to mind, that he was a jovial actor and manager. I cannot marry this fact to his verse. Other admirable men have led lives in some sort of keeping with their thought; but this man, in wide contrast. Had he been less, had he reached only the common measure of great authors, of Bacon, Milton, Tasso,° Cervantes,° we might leave the fact in the twilight of human fate: but, that this man of men, he who gave to the science of mind a new and larger subject than had ever existed, and planted the standard of humanity some furlongs forward into Chaos,° —that he should not be wise for himself,—it must even go into the world's history, that the

best poet led an obscure and profane life, using his genius for the public amusement.

28. Well, other men, priest and prophet, Israelite, German, and Swede, beheld the same objects: they also saw through them that which was contained. And to what purpose? The beauty straightway vanished; they read commandments, all-excluding mountainous duty; an obligation, a sadness, as of piled mountains, fell on them, and life became ghastly, joyless, a pilgrim's progress, a probation, beleaguered round with doleful histories of Adam's fall and curse, behind us; with doomsdays and purgatorial and penal fires before us; and the heart of the seer and the heart of the listener sank in them.

29. It must be conceded that these are half-views of half-men. The world still wants its poet-priest, a reconciler, who shall not trifle with Shakspeare the player, nor shall grope in graves with Swedenborg° the mourner; but who shall see, speak, and act, with equal inspiration. For knowledge will brighten the sunshine; right is more beautiful than private affection; and love is compatible with universal wisdom.

NATURE

The rounded world is fair to see,
Nine times folded in mystery:
Though baffled seers cannot impart
The secret of its laboring heart,
Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,
And all is clear from east to west.
Spirit that lurks each form within
Beckons to spirit of its kin;
Self-kindled every atom glows,
And hints the future which it owes.

1. THERE are days which occur in this climate, at almost any season of the year, wherein the world reaches its perfection, when the air, the heavenly bodies, and the earth, make a harmony, as if nature would indulge her offspring; when, in these bleak upper sides of the planet, nothing is to desire that we have heard of the happiest latitudes, and we bask in the shining hours of Florida and Cuba; when everything that has life gives sign of satisfaction, and the cattle that lie on the ground seem to have great and tranquil thoughts. These halcyons may be looked for with a little more assurance in that pure October weather, which we distinguish by the name of Indian Summer. The day, immeasur-

ably long, sleeps over the broad hills and warm wide fields. To have lived through all its sunny hours seems longevity enough. The solitary places do not seem quite lonely. At the gates of the forest,° the surprised man of the world is forced to leave his city estimates of great and small, wise and foolish. The knapsack of custom falls off his back with the first step he makes into these precincts. Here is sanctity which shames our religions, and reality which discredits our heroes. Here we find nature to be the circumstance which dwarfs every other circumstance, and judges like a god all men that come to her. We have crept out of our close and crowded houses into the night and morning, and we see what majestic beauties daily wrap us in their bosom. How willingly we would escape the barriers which render them comparatively impotent, escape the sophistication and second thought, and suffer nature to entrance us. The tempered light of the woods is like a perpetual morning, and is stimulating and heroic. The anciently reported spells of these places creep on us. The stems of pines, hemlocks, and oaks, almost gleam like iron on the excited eye. The incommunicable trees begin to persuade us to live with them, and quit our life of solemn trifles. Here no history, or church, or state, is interpolated on the divine sky and the immortal year. How

easily we might walk onward into opening landscape, absorbed by new pictures, and by thoughts fast succeeding each other, until by degrees the recollection of home was crowded out of the mind, all memory obliterated by the tyranny of the present, and we were led in triumph by nature.

2. These enchantments are medicinal, they sober and heal us. These are plain pleasures, kindly and native to us. We come to our own, and make friends with matter, which the ambitious chatter of the schools would persuade us to despise. We never can part with it; the mind loves its old home: as water to our thirst, so is the rock, the ground, to our eyes, and hands, and feet. It is firm water; it is cold flame; what health, what affinity! Ever an old friend, ever like a dear friend and brother, when we chat affectedly with strangers, comes in this honest face, and takes a grave liberty with us, and shames us out of our nonsense. Cities give not the human senses room enough. We go out daily and nightly to feed the eyes on the horizon, and require so much scope, just as we need water for our bath. There are all degrees of natural influence, from these quarantine powers of nature, up to her dearest and gravest ministrations to the imagination and the soul. There is the bucket of cold water from the spring, the wood fire

to which the chilled traveler rushes for safety, —and there is the sublime moral of autumn and of noon. We nestle in nature, and draw our living as parasites from her roots and grains, and we receive glances from the heavenly bodies, which call us to solitude, and foretell the remotest future. The blue zenith is the point in which romance and reality meet. I think, if we should be rapt away into all that we dream of heaven, and should converse with Gabriel° and Uriel,° the upper sky would be all that would remain of our furniture.

3. It seems as if the day was not wholly profane, in which we have given heed to some natural object. The fall of snowflakes in a still air, preserving to each crystal its perfect form; the blowing of sleet over a wide sheet of water, and over plains; the waving rye-field; the mimic waving of acres of houstonia, whose innumerable florets whiten and ripple before the eye; the reflections of trees and flowers in glassy lakes; the musical steaming odorous south wind, which converts all trees to windharps; the crackling and spurting of hemlock in the flames; or of pine-logs, which yield glory to the walls and faces in the sitting-room,— these are the music and pictures of the most ancient religion. My house stands in low land, with limited outlook, and on the skirt of the village.° But I go with my friend to the shore

of our little river,° and with one stroke of the paddle, I leave the village politics and personalities, yes, and the world of villages and personalities behind, and pass into a delicate realm of sunset and moonlight, too bright almost for spotted man to enter without novitiate and probation. We penetrate bodily this incredible beauty: we dip our hands in this painted element: our eyes are bathed in these lights and forms. A holiday, a villeggiatura,° a royal revel, the proudest, most heart-rejoicing festival that valor and beauty, power and taste, ever decked and enjoyed, establishes itself on the instant. These sunset clouds, these delicately emerging stars, with their private and ineffable glances, signify it and proffer it. I am taught the poorness of our invention, the ugliness of towns and palaces. Art and luxury have early learned that they must work as enhancement and sequel to this original beauty. I am overinstructed for my return. Henceforth I shall be hard to please. I cannot go back to toys. I am grown expensive and sophisticated. I can no longer live without elegance: but a countryman shall be my master of revels. He who knows the most, he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man. Only as far as the masters of the

world have called in nature to their aid, can they reach the height of magnificence. This is the meaning of their hanging-gardens, villas, garden-houses, islands, parks, and preserves, to back their faulty personality with these strong accessories. I do not wonder that the landed interest should be invincible in the state with these dangerous auxiliaries. These bribe and invite; not kings, not palaces, not men, not women, but these tender and poetic stars, eloquent of secret promises. We heard what the rich man said, we knew of his villa, his grove, his wine, and his company, but the provocation and point of the invitation came out of these beguiling stars. In their soft glances I see what men strove to realize in some Versailles,° or Paphos,° or Ctesiphon.° Indeed, it is the magical lights of the horizon, and the blue sky for the background, which save all our works of art which were otherwise bawbles. When the rich tax the poor with servility and obsequiousness, they should consider the effect of men reputed to be the possessors of nature, on imaginative minds. Ah! if the rich were rich as the poor fancy riches! A boy hears a military band play on the field at night, and he has kings and queens, and famous chivalry palpably before him. He hears the echoes of a horn in a hill country, in the Notch Mountains, for example, which con-

verts the mountains into an Æolian harp,° and this supernatural *tiralira* restores to him the Dorian° mythology, Apollo,° Diana,° and all divine hunters and huntresses. Can a musical note be so lofty, so haughtily beautiful! To the poor young poet, thus fabulous in his picture of society; he is loyal; he respects the rich; they are rich for the sake of his imagination; how poor his fancy would be, if they were not rich! That they have some high-fenced grove, which they call a park; that they live in larger and better-garnished saloons than he has visited, and go in coaches, keeping only the society of the elegant, to watering-places, and to distant cities, are the groundwork from which he has delineated estates of romance, compared with which their actual possessions are shanties and paddocks. The muse herself betrays her son, and enhances the gifts of wealth and well-born beauty, by a radiation out of the air, and clouds, and forests that skirt the road,—a certain haughty favor, as if from patrician genii° to patricians, a kind of aristocracy in nature, a prince of the power of the air.

4. The moral sensibility which makes Edens and Tempes° so easily, may not be always found, but the material landscape is never far off. We can find these enchantments without visiting the Como Lake, or the Madeira Is-

lands. We exaggerate the praises of local scenery. In every landscape the point of astonishment is the meeting of the sky and the earth, and that is seen from the first hillock as well as from the top of the Alleghanies. The stars at night stoop down over the brownest, homeliest common with all the spiritual magnificence which they shed on the Campagna,° or on the marble deserts of Egypt. The uprolled clouds, and the colors of morning and evening, will transfigure maples and alders. The difference between landscape and landscape is small, but there is great difference in the beholders. There is nothing so wonderful in any particular landscape, as the necessity of being beautiful under which every landscape lies. Nature cannot be surprised in undress. Beauty breaks in everywhere.

5. But it is very easy to outrun the sympathy of readers on this topic, which schoolmen called *natura naturata,* or nature passive. One can hardly speak directly of it without excess. It is as easy to broach in mixed companies what is called "the subject of religion." A susceptible person does not like to indulge his tastes in this kind, without the apology of some trivial necessity: he goes to see a woodlot, or to look at the crops, or to fetch a plant or a mineral from a remote locality, or he carries a fowling-piece, or a fishing-rod. I sup-

pose this shame must have a good reason. A dilettantism in nature is barren and unworthy. The fop of fields is no better than his brother of Broadway. Men are naturally hunters and inquisitive of woodcraft, and I suppose that such a gazetteer as wood-cutters and Indians should furnish facts for, would take place in the most sumptuous drawing-rooms of all the "Wreaths" and "Flora's chaplets°" of the book-shops; yet ordinarily, whether we are too clumsy for so subtle a topic, or from whatever cause, as soon as men begin to write on nature, they fall into euphuism. Frivolity is a most unfit tribute to Pan,° who ought to be represented in the mythology as the most continent of gods. I would not be frivolous before the admirable reserve and prudence of time, yet I cannot renounce the right of returning often to this old topic. The multitude of false churches accredits the true religion. Literature, poetry, science, are the homage of man to this unfathomed secret, concerning which no sane man can affect an indifference or incuriosity. Nature is loved by what is best in us. It is loved as the city of God, although, or rather because there is no citizen. The sunset is unlike anything that is underneath it: it wants men. And the beauty of nature must always seem unreal and mocking until the landscape

has human figures that are as good as itself. If there were good men, there would never be this rapture in nature. If the king is in the palace nobody looks at the walls. It is when he is gone, and the house is filled with grooms and gazers, that we turn from the people to find relief in the majestic men that are suggested by the pictures and the architecture. The critics who complain of the sickly separation of the beauty of nature from the thing to be done, must consider that our hunting of the picturesque is inseparable from our protest against false society. Man is fallen; nature is erect, and serves as a differential thermometer, detecting the presence or absence of the divine sentiment in man. By fault of our dulness and selfishness, we are looking up to nature, but when we are convalescent, nature will look up to us. We see the foaming brook with compunction: if our own life flowed with the right energy, we should shame the brook. The stream of zeal sparkles with real fire, and not with reflex rays of sun and moon. Nature may be as selfishly studied° as trade. Astronomy to the selfish becomes astrology; psychology, mesmerism (with intent to show where our spoons are gone); and anatomy and physiology, become phrenology and palmistry.

6. But taking timely warning, and leaving many things unsaid on this topic, let us not

longer omit our homage to the Efficient Nature, *natura naturans,* the quick cause, before which all forms flee as the driven snows, itself secret, its works driven before it in flocks and multitudes, (as the ancient represented nature by Proteus,° a shepherd), and in undescribable variety. It publishes itself in creatures, reaching from particles and spicula, through transformation on transformation to the highest symmetries, arriving at consummate results without a shock or a leap. A little heat, that is, a little motion, is all that differences the bald, dazzling white, and deadly cold poles of the earth from the prolific tropical climates. All changes pass without violence, by reason of the two cardinal conditions of boundless space and boundless time. Geology has initiated us into the secularity of nature, and taught us to disuse our dame-school measures, and exchange our Mosaic° and Ptolemaic° schemes for her large style. We knew nothing rightly, for want of perspective. Now we learn what patient periods must round themselves before the rock is formed, then before the rock is broken, and the first lichen race has disintegrated the thinnest external plate into soil, and opened the door° for the remote Flora,° Fauna,° Ceres,° and Pomona,° to come in. How far off yet is the trilobite! how far the quadruped! how inconceivably remote is man!

All duly arrive, and then race after race of men. It is a long way from granite to the oyster; further yet to Plato, and the preaching of the immortality of the soul. Yet all must come, as surely as the first atom has two sides.

7. Motion or change, and identity or rest, are the first and second secrets of nature: Motion and Rest. The whole code of her laws may be written on the thumb-nail, or the signet of a ring. The whirling bubble on the surface of a brook admits us to the secret of the mechanics of the sky. Every shell on the beach is a key to it. A little water made to rotate in a cup explains the formation of the simpler shells; the addition of matter from year to year, arrives at last at the most complex forms; and yet so poor is nature with all her craft, that, from the beginning to the end of the universe, she has but one stuff,—but one stuff with its two ends, to serve up all her dream-like variety. Compound it how she will, star, sand, fire, water, tree, man, it is still one stuff, and betrays the same properties.

8. Nature is always consistent, though she feigns to contravene her own laws. She keeps her laws, and seems to transcend them. She arms and equips an animal to find its place and living in the earth, and, at the same time, she arms and equips another animal to destroy it. Space exists to divide creatures; but by

clothing the sides of a bird with a few feathers, she gives him a petty omnipresence. The direction is forever onward, but the artist still goes back for materials, and begins again with the first elements on the most advanced stage: otherwise, all goes to ruin. If we look at her work, we seem to catch a glance of a system in transition. Plants are the young of the world, vessels of health and vigor; but they grope ever upward toward consciousness; the trees are imperfect men, and seem to bemoan their imprisonment, rooted in the ground. The animal is the novice and probationer of a more advanced order. The men, though young, having tasted the first drop from the cup of thought, are already dissipated: the maples and ferns are still uncorrupt; yet no doubt, when they come to consciousness, they too will curse and swear. Flowers so strictly belong to youth that we adult men soon come to feel that their beautiful generations concern not us: we have had our day; now let the children have theirs. The flowers jilt us, and we are old bachelors with our ridiculous tenderness.

9. Things are so strictly related, that according to the skill of the eye, from any one object the parts and properties of any other may be predicted. If we had eyes to see it, a bit of stone from the city wall would certify us of the necessity that man must exist, as readily

"The Old Manse," Concord

Built in 1765 for the Reverend William Emerson. Here the greater part of "Nature" was written.

as the city. That identity makes us all one, and reduces to nothing great intervals on our customary scale. We talk of deviations from natural life as if artificial life were not also natural. The smoothest curled courtier in the boudoirs of a palace has an animal nature, rude and aboriginal as a white bear, omnipotent to its own ends, and is directly related, there amid essences and billets-doux, to Himalaya mountain-chains and the axis of the globe. If we consider how much we are nature's, we need not be superstitious about towns, as if that terrific or benefic force did not find us there also, and fashion cities. Nature who made the mason, made the house. We may easily hear too much of rural influences. The cool, disengaged air of natural objects makes them enviable to us, chafed and irritable creatures with red faces, and we think we shall be as grand as they if we camp out and eat roots; but let us be men instead of woodchucks, and the oak and the elm will gladly serve us, though we sit in chairs of ivory on carpets of silk.

10. This guiding identity runs through all the surprises and contrasts of the piece, and characterizes every law. Man carries the world in his head, the whole astronomy and chemistry suspended in a thought. Because the history of nature is charactered in his brain,

therefore is he the prophet and discoverer of her secrets. Every known fact in natural science was divined by the presentiment of somebody before it was actually verified. A man does not tie his shoe without recognizing laws which bind the farthest regions of nature; moon, plant, gas, crystal, are concrete geometry and numbers. Common sense knows its own, and recognizes the fact at first sight in chemical experiment. The common sense of Franklin,° Dalton,° Davy,° and Black,° is the same common sense which made the arrangements which now it discovers.

11. If the identity expresses organized rest, the counter action runs also into organization. The astronomers said, "Give us matter and a little motion, and we will construct the universe. It is not enough that we should have matter, we must also have a single impulse, one shove to launch the mass and generate the harmony of the centrifugal and centripetal forces. Once heave the ball from the hand, and we can show how all this mighty order grew." "A very unreasonable postulate," said the metaphysicians, "and a plain begging of the question. Could you not prevail to know the genesis of projection, as well as the continuation of it?" Nature, meanwhile, had not waited for the discussion, but, right or wrong, bestowed the impulse, and the balls rolled. It was

no great affair, a mere push, but the astronomers were right in making much of it, for there is no end to the consequences of the act. That famous aboriginal push propagates itself through all the balls of the system, and through every atom of every ball, through all the races of creatures, and through the history and performance of every individual. Exaggeration is in the course of things. Nature sends no creature, no man into the world, without adding a small excess of his proper quality. Given the planet, it is still necessary to add the impulse; so, to every creature nature added a little violence of direction in its proper path, a shove to put it on its way; in every instance, a slight generosity, a drop too much. Without electricity the air would rot, and without this violence of direction, which men and women have, without a spice of bigot and fanatic, no excitement, no efficiency. We aim above the mark, to hit the mark. Every act hath some falsehood of exaggeration in it. And when now and then comes along some sad, sharp-eyed man, who sees how paltry a game is played, and refuses to play, but blabs the secret, how then? is the bird flown? O no, the wary Nature sends a new troop of fairer forms, of lordlier youths, with a little more excess of direction to hold them fast to their several aims; makes them a little wrongheaded in that direction in which they

are rightest, and on goes the game again with new whirl, for a generation or two more. The child with his sweet pranks, the fool of his senses, commanded by every sight and sound, without any power to compare and rank his sensations, abandoned to a whistle or a painted chip, to a lead dragoon, or a ginger-bread dog, individualizing everything, generalizing nothing, delighted with every new thing, lies down at night overpowered by the fatigue which this day of continual petty madness has incurred. But Nature has answered her purpose with the curly, dimpled lunatic. She has tasked every faculty and has secured the symmetrical growth of the bodily frame, by all these attitudes and exertions—an end of the first importance, which could not be trusted to any care less perfect than her own. This glitter, this opaline lustre, plays round the top of every toy to his eye, to insure his fidelity, and he is deceived to his good. We are made alive and kept alive by the same arts. Let the stoics° say what they please, we do not eat for the good of living, but because the meat is savory and the appetite is keen. The vegetable life does not content itself with casting from the flower or the tree a single seed, but it fills the air and earth with a prodigality of seeds, that, if thousands perish, thousands may plant themselves, that hundreds may come up, that

tens may live to maturity, that at least one may replace the parent. All things betray the same calculated profusion. The excess of fear with which the animal frame is hedged round, shrinking from cold, starting at sight of a snake, or at a sudden noise, protects us, through a multitude of groundless alarms, from some one real danger at last. The lover seeks in marriage his private felicity and perfection, with no prospective end; and nature hides in his happiness her own end, namely, progeny, or the perpetuity of the race.

12. But the craft with which the world is made runs also into the mind and character of men. No man is quite sane; each has a vein of folly in his composition, a slight determination of blood to the head, to make sure of holding him hard to some one point which nature had taken to heart. Great causes are never tried on their merits; but the cause is reduced to particulars to suit the size of the partisan, and the contention is ever hottest on minor matters. Not less remarkable is the overfaith of each man in the importance of what he has to do or say. The poet, the prophet, has a higher value for what he utters than any hearer, and therefore it gets spoken. The strong, self-complacent Luther declares with an emphasis, not to be mistaken, that "God himself cannot do without wise men." Jacob Behmen° and

George Fox° betray their egotism in the pertinacity of their controversial tracts, and James Naylor° once suffered himself to be worshiped as the Christ. Each prophet comes presently to identify himself with his thought, and to esteem his hat and shoes sacred. However this may discredit such persons with the judicious, it helps them with the people, as it gives heat, pungency, and publicity to their words. A similar experience is not infrequent in private life. Each young and ardent person writes a diary, in which, when the hours of prayer and penitence arrive, he inscribes his soul. The pages thus written are, to him, burning and fragrant; he reads them on his knees by midnight and by the morning star; he wets them with his tears; they are sacred; too good for the world, and hardly yet to be shown to the dearest friend. This is the man-child that is born to the soul, and her life still circulates in the babe. The umbilical cord has not yet been cut. After some time has elapsed, he begins to wish to admit his friend to this hallowed experience, and with hesitation, yet with firmness, exposes the pages to his eye. Will they not burn his eyes? The friend coldly turns them over, and passes from the writing to conversation, with easy transition, which strikes the other party with astonishment and vexation. He cannot suspect the writing itself. Days

and nights of fervid life, of communion with angels of darkness and of light, have engraved their shadowy characters on that tear-stained book. He suspects the intelligence or the heart of his friend. Is there then no friend? He cannot yet credit that one may have impressive experience, and yet may not know how to put his private fact into literature; and perhaps the discovery that wisdom has other tongues and ministers than we, that though we should hold our peace, the truth would not the less be spoken, might check injuriously the flames of our zeal. A man can only speak, so long as he does not feel his speech to be partial and inadequate. It is partial, but he does not see it to be so, whilst he utters it. As soon as he is released from the instinctive and particular, and sees its partiality, he shuts his mouth in disgust. For, no man can write anything, who does not think that what he writes is for the time the history of the world; or do anything well who does not esteem his work to be of importance. My work may be of none, but I must not think it of none, or I shall not do it with impunity.

13. In like manner, there is throughout nature something mocking, something that leads us on and on, but arrives nowhere, keeps no faith with us. All promise outruns the performance. We live in a system of approxima-

tions. Every end is prospective of some other end, which is also temporary; a round and final success nowhere. We are encamped in nature, not domesticated. Hunger and thirst lead us on to eat and to drink; but bread and wine, mix and cook them how you will, leave us hungry and thirsty, after the stomach is full. It is the same with all our arts and performances. Our music, our poetry, our language itself are not satisfactions, but suggestions. The hunger for wealth, which reduces the planet to a garden, fools the eager pursuer. What is the end sought? Plainly to secure the ends of good sense and beauty from the intrusion of deformity or vulgarity of any kind. But what an operose method! What a train of means to secure a little conversation! This palace of brick and stone, these servants, this kitchen, these stables, horses and equipage, this bank-stock and file of mortgages; trade to all the world, country-house and cottage by the water-side, all for a little conversation, high, clear, and spiritual! Could it not be had as well by beggars on the highway? No, all these things came from successive efforts of these beggars to remove friction from the wheels of life, and give opportunity. Conversation, character, were the avowed ends; wealth was good as it appeased the animal cravings, cured the smoky chimney, silenced

the creaking door, brought friends together in a warm and quiet room, and kept the children and the dinner-table in a different apartment. Thought, virtue, beauty, were the ends; but it was known that men of thought and virtue sometimes had the headache, or wet feet, or could lose good time while the room was getting warm in winter days. Unluckily, in the exertions necessary to remove these inconveniences, the main attention has been diverted to this object; the old aims have been lost sight of, and to remove friction has come to be the end. That is the ridicule of rich men, and Boston, London, Vienna, and now the governments generally of the world, are cities and governments of the rich, and the masses are not men, but *poor men*, that is, men who would be rich; this is the ridicule of the class, that they arrive with pains and sweat and fury nowhere; when all is done, it is for nothing. They are like one who has interrupted the conversation of a company to make his speech, and now has forgotten what he went to say. The appearance strikes the eye everywhere of an aimless society, of aimless nations. Were the ends of nature so great and cogent, as to exact this immense sacrifice of men?

14. Quite analogous to the deceits in life, there is, as might be expected, a similar effect on the eye from the face of external nature.

There is in woods and waters a certain enticement and flattery, together with a failure to yield a present satisfaction. This disappointment is felt in every landscape. I have seen the softness and beauty of the summer clouds floating feathery overhead, enjoying, as it seemed, their height and privilege of motion, while yet they appeared not so much the drapery of this place and hour, as forelooking to some pavilions and gardens of festivity beyond. It is an odd jealousy; but the poet finds himself not near enough to his object. The pine tree, the river, the bank of flowers before him, does not seem to be nature. Nature is still elsewhere. This or this is but outskirt and far-off reflection and echo of the triumph that has passed by, and is now at its glancing splendor and heyday, perchance in the neighboring fields, or, if you stand in the field, then in the adjacent woods. The present object shall give you this sense of stillness that follows a pageant which has just gone by. What splendid distance, what recesses of ineffable pomp and loveliness in the sunset! But who can go where they are, or lay his hand or plant his foot thereon? Off they fall from the round world forever and ever. It is the same among men and women as among the silent trees; always a referred existence, an absence, never a presence and satisfaction. Is it, that beauty can

never be grasped? in persons and in landscape is equally inaccessible? The accepted and betrothed lover has lost the wildest charm of his maiden in her acceptance of him. She was heaven whilst he pursued her as a star: she cannot be heaven, if she stoops to such a one as he.

15. What shall we say of this omnipresent appearance of that first projectile impulse, of this flattery and balking of so many well-meaning creatures? Must we not suppose somewhere in the universe a slight treachery and derision? Are we not engaged to a serious resentment of this use that is made of us? Are we tickled trout, and fools of nature? One look at the face of heaven and earth lays all petulance at rest, and soothes us to wiser convictions. To the intelligent, nature converts itself into a vast promise, and will not be rashly explained. Her secret is untold. Many and many an Œdipus° arrives: he has the whole mystery teeming in his brain. Alas! the same sorcery has spoiled his skill; no syllable can he shape on his lips. Her mighty orbit vaults like the fresh rainbow into the deep, but no archangel's wing was yet strong enough to follow it, and report of the return of the curve. But it also appears that our actions are seconded and disposed to greater conclusions than we designed. We are escorted on every hand through life

by spiritual agents, and a beneficent purpose lies in wait for us. We cannot bandy words with nature, or deal with her as we deal with persons. If we measure our individual forces against hers, we may easily feel as if we were the sport of an insuperable destiny. But if, instead of identifying ourselves with the work, we feel that the soul of the workman streams through us, we shall find the peace of the morning dwelling first in our hearts, and the fathomless powers of gravity and chemistry, and, over them, of life, pre-existing within us in their highest form.

16. The uneasiness which the thought of our helplessness in the chain of causes occasions us, results from looking too much at one condition of nature, namely, Motion. But the drag is never taken from the wheel. Wherever the impulse exceeds, the Rest or Identity insinuates its compensation. All over the wide fields of earth grows the prunella or self-heal. After every foolish day we sleep off the fumes and furies of its hours; and though we are always engaged with particulars, and often enslaved to them, we bring with us to every experiment the innate universal laws. These, while they exist in the mind as ideas, stand around us in nature forever embodied, a present sanity to expose and cure the insanity of men. Our servitude to particulars betrays us

into a hundred foolish expectations. We anticipate a new era from the invention of a locomotive, or a balloon; the new engine brings with it the old checks. They say that by electro-magnetism, your salad shall be grown from the seed while your fowl is roasting for dinner: it is a symbol of our modern aims and endeavors,—of our condensation and acceleration of objects: but nothing is gained: nature cannot be cheated: man's life is but seventy salads long, grow they swift or grow they slow. In these checks and impossibilities, however, we find our advantage, not less than in the impulses. Let the victory fall where it will, we are on that side. And the knowledge that we traverse the whole scale of being, from the centre to the poles of nature, and have some stake in every possibility, lends that sublime lustre to death, which philosophy and religion have too outwardly and literally striven to express in the popular doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The reality is more excellent than the report. Here is no ruin, no discontinuity, no spent ball. The divine circulations never rest nor linger. Nature is the incarnation of a thought, and turns to a thought again, as ice becomes water and gas. The world is mind precipitated, and the volatile essence is forever escaping again into the state of free thought. Hence the virtue and pungency of

the influence on the mind, of natural objects, whether inorganic or organized. Man imprisoned, man crystallized, man vegetative, speaks to man impersonated. That power which does not respect quantity, which makes the whole and the particle its equal channel, delegates its smile to the morning, and distills its essence into every drop of rain. Every moment instructs, and every object: for wisdom is infused into every form. It has been poured into us as blood; it convulsed us as pain; it slid into us as pleasure; it enveloped us in dull, melancholy days, or in days of cheerful labor; we did not guess its essence until after a long time.

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

An Oration Delivered Before The Phi Beta Kappa Society, at Cambridge, August 31, 1837

Mr. President and Gentlemen,

1. I greet you on the recommencement of our literary year. Our anniversary is one of hope, and, perhaps, not enough of labor. We do not meet for games of strength° or skill, for the recitation of histories, tragedies, and odes, like the ancient Greeks; for parliaments of love and poesy, like the Troubadours°; nor for the advancement of science, like our contemporaries in the British and European capitals. Thus far, our holiday has been simply a friendly sign of the survival of the love of letters amongst a people too busy to give to letters any more. As such it is precious as the sign of an indestructible instinct. Perhaps the time is already come when it ought to be, and will be, something else; when the sluggard intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the

learning of other lands, draws to a close. The millions that around us are rushing into life, cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise that must be sung, that will sing themselves. Who can doubt that poetry will revive and lead in a new age, as the star in the constellation Harp, which now flames in our zenith, astronomers announce, shall one day be the pole star° for a thousand years?

2. In this hope I accept the topic which not only usage but the nature of our association seem to prescribe to this day,—the AMERICAN SCHOLAR. Year by year we come up hither to read one more chapter of his biography. Let us inquire what light new events and days have thrown on his character and his hopes.

3. It is one of those fables which out of an unknown antiquity convey an unlooked-for wisdom, that the gods, in the beginning, divided Man into men, that he might be more helpful to himself; just as the hand was divided into fingers, the better to answer its end.

4. The old fable covers a doctrine ever new and sublime; that there is One Man,—present to all particular men only partially, or through one faculty; and that you must take the whole society to find the whole man. Man is not a farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is all. Man is priest, and scholar, and states-

man, and producer, and soldier. In the *divided* or social state these functions are parcelled out to individuals, each of whom aims to do his stint of the joint work; whilst each other performs his. The fable implies that the individual, to possess himself, must sometimes return from his own labor to embrace all the other laborers. But, unfortunately, this original unit, this fountain of power, has been so distributed to multitudes, has been so minutely subdivided and peddled out, that it is spilled into drops, and cannot be gathered. The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters,—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.

5. Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things. The planter, who is Man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of Man on the farm. The tradesman scarcely ever gives an idea worth to his work, but is ridden by the routine of his craft, and the soul is subject to dollars. The priest becomes a form; the attorney a statute-book; the mechanic a machine; the sailor a rope of the ship.

6. In this distribution of functions the

scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state he is *Man Thinking*. In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or, still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking.

7. In this view of him, as Man Thinking, the theory of his office is contained. Him Nature solicits with all her placid, all her monitory pictures; him the past instructs; him the future invites. Is not indeed every man a student, and do not all things exist for the student's behoof? And, finally, is not the true scholar the only true master? But as the old oracle said, "All things have two handles: Beware of the wrong one."° In life, too often, the scholar errs with mankind and forfeits his privilege. Let us see him in his school, and consider him in reference to the main influences he receives.

8. I. The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of nature. Every day, the sun; and, after sunset, Night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows. Every day, men and women, conversing, beholding and beholden. The scholar must needs stand wistful and admiring before this great spectacle. He must settle its value in his mind. What is nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end, to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power return-

ing into itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning, whose ending, he never can find,—so entire, so boundless. Far too as her splendors shine, system on system shooting like rays, upward, downward, without centre, without circumference,—in the mass and in the particle, Nature hastens to render account of herself to the mind. Classification begins. To the young mind every thing is individual, stands by itself. By and by it finds how to join two things and see in them one nature; then three, then three thousand; and so, tyrannized over by its own unifying instinct, it goes on tying things together, diminishing anomalies, discovering roots running under ground whereby contrary and remote things cohere and flower out from one stem. It presently learns that since the dawn of history there has been a constant accumulation and classifying of facts. But what is classification but the perceiving that these objects are not chaotic, and are not foreign, but have a law which is also a law of the human mind? The astronomer discovers that geometry, a pure abstraction of the human mind, is the measure of planetary motion. The chemist finds proportions and intelligible method throughout matter; and science is nothing but the finding of analogy, identity, in the most remote parts. The ambitious soul sits down before each re-

fractory fact; one after another reduces all strange constitutions, all new powers, to their class and their law, and goes on forever to animate the last fibre of organization, the outskirts of nature, by insight.

9. Thus to him, to this school-boy under the bending dome of day, is suggested that he and it proceed from one root; one is leaf and one is flower; relation, sympathy, stirring in every vein. And what is that root? Is not that the soul of his soul?—A thought too bold?—A dream too wild? Yet when this spiritual light shall have revealed the law of more earthly natures, —when he has learned to worship the soul, and to see that the natural philosophy that now is, is only the first gropings of its gigantic hand, he shall look forward to an ever expanding knowledge as to a becoming creator. He shall see that nature is the opposite of the soul, answering to it part for part. One is seal and one is print. Its beauty is the beauty of his own mind. Its laws are the laws of his own mind. Nature then becomes to him the measure of his attainments. So much of nature as he is ignorant of, so much of his own mind does he not yet possess. And, in fine, the ancient precept, "Know thyself,"° and the modern precept, "Study nature," become at last one maxim.

10. II. The next great influence into the

spirit of the scholar is the mind of the Past,—in whatever form, whether of literature, of art, of institutions, that mind is inscribed. Books are the best type of the influence of the past, and perhaps we shall get at the truth,—learn the amount of this influence more conveniently,—by considering their value alone.

11. The theory of books is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again. It came into him life; it went out from him truth. It came to him short-lived actions; it went out from him immortal thoughts. It came to him business; it went from him poetry. It was dead fact; now, it is quick thought. It can stand, and it can go. It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires. Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing.

12. Or, I might say, it depends on how far the process had gone, of transmuting life into truth. In proportion to the completeness of the distillation, so will the purity and imperishableness of the product be. But none is quite perfect. As no air-pump can by any means make a perfect vacuum, so neither can any artist entirely exclude the conventional, the local, the perishable from his book, or

write a book of pure thought, that shall be as efficient, in all respects, to a remote posterity, as to contemporaries, or rather to the second age. Each age, it is found, must write its own books; or rather, each generation for the next succeeding. The books of an older period will not fit this.

13. Yet hence arises a grave mischief. The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation, the act of thought, is transferred to the record. The poet chanting was felt to be a divine man. Henceforth the chant is divine also. The writer was a just and wise spirit: henceforward it is settled the book is perfect; as love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue. Instantly the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of Reason, having once so opened, having once received this book, stands upon it, and makes an outcry if it is disparaged. Colleges are built on it. Books are written on it by thinkers, not by Man Thinking; by men of talent, that is, who start wrong, who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principles. Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero,° which Locke,° which Bacon,° have given; forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young

men in libraries when they wrote these books.

14. Hence, instead of Man Thinking, we have the bookworm. Hence the book-learned class, who value books, as such; not as related to nature and the human constitution, but as making a sort of Third Estate° with the world and the soul. Hence the restorers of readings,° the emendators, the bibliomaniacs of all degrees.

15. Books are the best of things, well used; abused, among the worst. What is the right use? What is the one end which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire. I had better never see a book than to be warped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit, and made a satellite instead of a system. The one thing in the world of value, is the active soul—the soul, free, sovereign, active. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, although in almost all men obstructed, and as yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth and utters truth, or creates. In this action it is genius; not the privilege of here and there a favorite, but the sound estate of every man. In its essence it is progressive. The book, the college, the school of art, the institution of any kind, stop with some past utterance of genius. This is good, say they,—let us hold by this. They pin me down. They look backward and not for-

ward. But genius always looks forward: the eyes of man are set in his forehead, not in his hindhead: man hopes: genius creates. To create is the proof of a divine presence. Whatever talents may be, if the man create not, the pure efflux of the Deity is not his;—cinders and smoke there may be, but not yet flame. There are creative manners, there are creative actions, and creative words; manners, actions, words, that is, indicative of no custom or authority, but spring spontaneous from the mind's own sense of good and fair.

16. On the other part, instead of being its own seer, let it receive from another mind its truth, though it were in torrents of light, without periods of solitude, inquest, and self-recovery, and a fatal disservice is done. Genius is always sufficiently the enemy of genius by over-influence. The literature of every nation bears me witness. The English dramatic poets have Shakspearized° now for two hundred years.

17. Undoubtedly there is a right way of reading, so it be sternly subordinated. Man Thinking must not be subdued by his instruments. Books are for the scholar's idle times. When he can read God directly, the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their readings. But when the intervals of darkness come, as come they must,—

when the soul seeth not, when the sun is hid and the stars withdraw their shining,—we repair to the lamps which were kindled by their ray, to guide our steps to the East again, where the dawn is. We hear, that we may speak. The Arabian proverb says, "A fig tree, looking on a fig tree, becometh fruitful."

18. It is remarkable, the character of the pleasure we derive from the best books. They impress us ever with the conviction that one nature wrote and the same reads. We read the verses of one of the great English poets, of Chaucer,° of Marvell,° of Dryden,° with the most modern joy,—with a pleasure, I mean, which is in great part caused by the abstraction of all *time* from their verses. There is some awe mixed with the joy of our surprise, when this poet, who lived in some past world, two or three hundred years ago, says that which lies close to my own soul, that which I also had well-nigh thought and said. But for the evidence thence afforded to the philosophical doctrine of the identity of all minds, we should suppose some pre-established harmony, some foresight of souls that were to be, and some preparation of stores for their future wants, like the fact observed in insects, who lay up food before death for the young grub they shall never see.

19. I would not be hurried by any love of

system, by any exaggeration of instincts, to underrate the Book. We all know, that as the human body can be nourished on any food, though it were boiled grass and the broth of shoes, so the human mind can be fed by any knowledge. And great and heroic men have existed who had almost no other information than by the printed page. I only would say that it needs a strong head to bear that diet. One must be an inventor to read well. As the proverb says, "He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry out the wealth of the Indies." ° There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world. We then see, what is always true, that as the seer's hour of vision is short and rare among heavy days and months, so is its record, perchance, the least part of his volume. The discerning will read, in his Plato or Shakspeare, only that least part,—only the authentic utterances of the oracle;—all the rest he rejects, were it never so many times Plato's and Shakspeare's.

20. Of course there is a portion of reading quite indispensable to a wise man. History and exact science he must learn by laborious read-

ing. Colleges, in like manner, have their indispensable office,—to teach elements. But they can only highly serve us when they aim not to drill, but to create; when they gather from far every ray of various genius to their hospitable halls, and by the concentrated fires, set the hearts of their youth on flame. Thought and knowledge are natures in which apparatus and pretension avail nothing. Gowns and pecuniary foundations, though of towns of gold, can never countervail the least sentence or syllable of wit. Forget this, and our American colleges will recede in their public importance, whilst they grow richer every year.

21. III. There goes in the world a notion that the scholar should be a recluse, a valetudinarian,—as unfit for any handiwork or public labor as a penknife for an ax. The so-called "practical men" sneer at speculative men, as if, because they speculate or *see*, they could do nothing. I have heard it said that the clergy,—who are always, more universally than any other class, the scholars of their day,—are addressed as women; that the rough, spontaneous conversation of men they do not hear, but only a mincing and diluted speech. They are often virtually disfranchised; and indeed there are advocates for their celibacy. As far as this is true of the studious classes, it is not just and wise. Action is with the scholar subor-

dinate, but it is essential. Without it he is not yet man. Without it thought can never ripen into truth. Whilst the world hangs before the eye as a cloud of beauty, we cannot even see its beauty. Inaction is cowardice, but there can be no scholar without the heroic mind. The preamble of thought, the transition through which it passes from the unconscious to the conscious, is action. Only so much do I know, as I have lived. Instantly we know whose words are loaded with life, and whose not.

22. The world—this shadow of the soul, or *other me,* lies wide around. Its attractions are the keys which unlock my thoughts and make me acquainted with myself. I launch eagerly into this resounding tumult. I grasp the hands of those next me, and take my place in the ring to suffer and to work, taught by an instinct that so shall the dumb abyss be vocal with speech. I pierce its order; I dissipate its fear°; I dispose of it within the circuit of my expanding life. So much only of life as I know by experience, so much of the wilderness have I vanquished and planted, or so far have I extended my being, my dominion. I do not see how any man can afford, for the sake of his nerves and his nap, to spare any action in which he can partake. It is pearls and rubies to his discourse. Drudgery, calamity, exasperation, want, are instructors in eloquence and wisdom.

The true scholar grudges every opportunity of action passed by, as a loss of power.

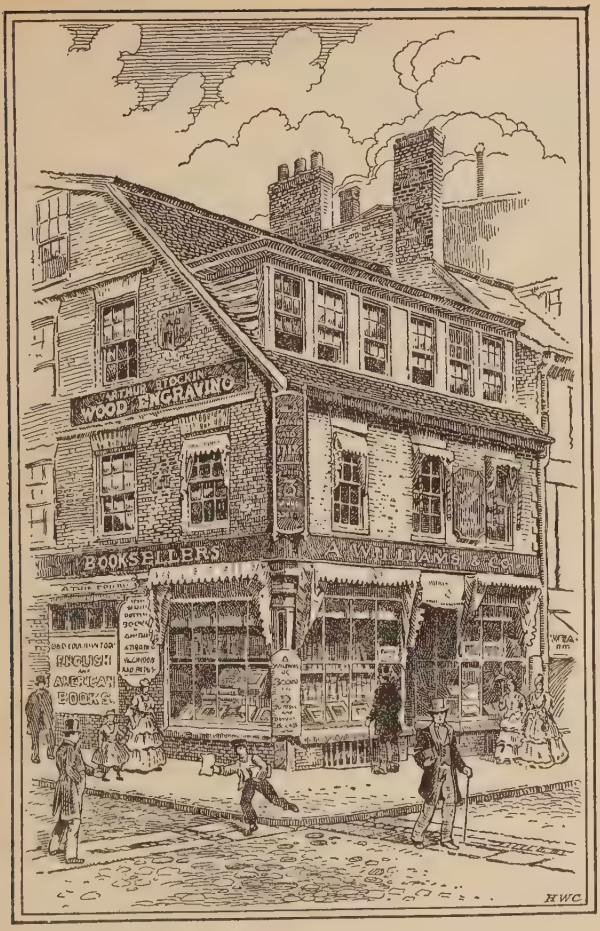
23. It is the raw material out of which the intellect moulds her splendid products. A strange process too, this by which experience is converted into thought, as a mulberry leaf is converted into satin.° The manufacture goes forward at all hours.

24. The actions and events of our childhood and youth are now matters of calmest observation. They lie like fair pictures in the air. Not so with our recent actions,—with the business which we now have in hand. On this we are quite unable to speculate. Our affections as yet circulate through it. We no more feel or know it than we feel the feet, or the hand, or the brain of our body. The new deed is yet a part of life,—remains for a time immersed in our unconscious life. In some contemplative hour it detaches itself from the life like a ripe fruit, to become a thought of the mind. Instantly it is raised, transfigured; the corruptible has put on incorruption.° Henceforth it is an object of beauty, however base its origin and neighborhood. Observe, too, the impossibility of antedating this act. In its grub state it cannot fly, it cannot shine, it is a dull grub. But suddenly, without observation, the selfsame thing unfurls beautiful wings, and is an angel of wisdom. So is there no fact, no event, in our

private history, which shall not, sooner or later, lose its adhesive, inert form, and astonish us by soaring from our body into the empyrean.° Cradle and infancy, school and playground, the fear of boys, and dogs, and ferrules, the love of little maids and berries, and many another fact that once filled the whole sky, are gone already; friend and relative, profession and party, town and country, nation and world, must also soar and sing.

25. Of course, he who has put forth his total strength in fit actions has the richest return of wisdom. I will not shut myself out of this globe of action, and transplant an oak into a flower-pot, there to hunger and pine; nor trust the revenue of some single faculty, and exhaust one vein of thought, much like those Savoyards,° who, getting their livelihood by carving shepherds, shepherdesses, and smoking Dutchmen, for all Europe, went out one day to the mountain to find stock, and discovered that they had whittled up the last of their pine trees. Authors we have, in numbers, who have written out their vein, and who, moved by a commendable prudence, sail for Greece or Palestine, follow the trapper into the prairie, or ramble round Algiers, to replenish their merchantable stock.

26. If it were only for a vocabulary, the scholar would be covetous of action. Life is our



THE OLD CORNER BOOKSTORE IN BOSTON
Here Emerson, Holmes, Longfellow, and many other writers gathered.

dictionary. Years are well spent in country labors; in town; in the insight into trades and manufactures; in frank intercourse with many men and women; in science; in art; to the one end of mastering in all their facts a language by which to illustrate and embody our perceptions. I learn immediately from any speaker how much he has already lived, through the poverty or the splendor of his speech. Life lies behind us as the quarry from whence we get tiles and copestones for the masonry of to-day. This is the way to learn grammar. Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and the work-yard made.

27. But the final value of action, like that of books, and better than books, is that it is a resource. That great principle of Undulation in nature, that shows itself in the inspiring and expiring of the breath; in desire and satiety; in the ebb and flow of the sea; in day and night; in heat and cold; and, as yet more deeply ingrained in every atom and every fluid, is known to us under the name of Polarity,— these "fits of easy transmission and reflection," as Newton called them, are the law of nature because they are the law of spirit.

28. The mind now thinks, now acts, and each fit reproduces the other. When the artist has exhausted his materials, when the fancy no longer paints, when thoughts are no longer

apprehended and books are a weariness,—he has always the resource *to live*. Character is higher than intellect. Thinking is the function. Living is the functionary. The stream retreats to its source. A great soul will be strong to live, as well as strong to think. Does he lack organ or medium to impart his truth? He can still fall back on this elemental force of living them. This is a total act. Thinking is a partial act. Let the grandeur of justice shine in his affairs. Let the beauty of affection cheer his lowly roof. Those "far from fame," who dwell and act with him, will feel the force of his constitution in the doings and passages of the day better than it can be measured by any public and designed display. Time shall teach him that the scholar loses no hour which the man lives. Herein he unfolds the sacred germ of his instinct, screened from influence. What is lost in seemliness is gained in strength. Not out of those on whom systems of education have exhausted their culture, comes the helpful giant to destroy the old or to build the new, but out of unhandselled savage nature; out of terrible Druids° and Berserkers° come at last Alfred° and Shakspeare. I hear therefore with joy whatever is beginning to be said of the dignity and necessity of labor to every citizen. There is virtue yet in the hoe and the spade, for learned as well as for unlearned hands. And labor is

everywhere welcome; always we are invited to work; only be this limitation observed, that a man shall not for the sake of wider activity sacrifice any opinion to the popular judgments and modes of action.

29. I have now spoken of the education of the scholar by nature, by books, and by action. It remains to say somewhat of his duties.

30. They are such as become Man Thinking. They may all be comprised in self-trust. The office of the scholar is to cheer, to raise, and to guide men by showing them facts amidst appearances. He plies the slow, unhonored, and unpaid task of observation. Flamsteed° and Herschel,° in their glazed observatories, may catalogue the stars with the praise of all men, and, the results being splendid and useful, honor is sure. But he, in his private observatory, cataloguing obscure and nebulous stars of the human mind, which as yet no man has thought of as such,—watching days and months sometimes for a few facts; correcting still his old records;—must relinquish display and immediate fame. In the long period of his preparation he must betray often an ignorance and shiftlessness in popular arts, incurring the disdain of the able who shoulder him aside. Long he must stammer in his speech; often forego the living for the dead. Worse yet, he must accept—how often!—poverty and solitude. For

the ease and pleasure of treading the old road, accepting the fashions, the education, the religion of society, he takes the cross of making his own, and, of course, the self-accusation, the faint heart, the frequent uncertainty and loss of time, which are the nettles and tangling vines in the way of the self-relying and self-directed; and the state of virtual hostility in which he seems to stand to society, and especially to educated society. For all this loss and scorn, what offset? He is to find consolation in exercising the highest functions of human nature. He is one who raises himself from private considerations and breathes and lives on public and illustrious thoughts. He is the world's eye. He is the world's heart. He is to resist the vulgar prosperity that retrogrades ever to barbarism, by preserving and communicating heroic sentiments, noble biographies, melodious verse, and the conclusions of history. Whatsoever oracles the human heart, in all emergencies, in all solemn hours, has uttered as its commentary on the world of actions,—these he shall receive and impart. And whatsoever new verdict Reason from her inviolable seat pronounces on the passing men and events of today,—this he shall hear and promulgate.

31. These being his functions, it becomes him to feel all confidence in himself, and to defer never to the popular cry. He and he

only knows the world. The world of any moment is the merest appearance. Some great decorum, some fetish of a government, some ephemeral trade, or war, or man, is cried up by half mankind and cried down by the other half, as if all depended on this particular up or down. The odds are that the whole question is not worth the poorest thought which the scholar has lost in listening to the controversy. Let him not quit his belief that a popgun is a popgun, though the ancient and honorable° of the earth affirm it to be the crack of doom. In silence, in steadiness, in severe abstraction, let him hold by himself; add observation to observation, patient of neglect, patient of reproach, and bide his own time,—happy enough if he can satisfy himself alone that this day he has seen something truly. Success treads on every right step. For the instinct is sure, that prompts him to tell his brother what he thinks. He then learns that in going down into the secrets of his own mind he has descended into the secrets of all minds. He learns that he who has mastered any law in his private thoughts, is master to that extent of all men whose language he speaks, and of all into whose language his own can be translated. The poet, in utter solitude remembering his spontaneous thoughts and recording them, is found to have recorded that which men in crowded cities find true for them

also. The orator distrusts at first the fitness of his frank confessions, his want of knowledge of the persons he addresses, until he finds that he is the complement of his hearers;—that they drink his words because he fulfills for them their own nature; the deeper he dives into his privatest, secretest presentiment, to his wonder he finds this is the most acceptable, most public, and universally true. The people delight in it; the better part of every man feels, This is my music; this is myself.

32. In self-trust all the virtues are comprehended. Free should the scholar be,—free and brave. Free even to the definition of freedom, "without any hindrance that does not arise out of his own constitution." Brave; for fear is a thing which a scholar by his very function puts behind him. Fear always springs from ignorance. It is a shame to him if his tranquillity, amid dangerous times, arise from the presumption that like children and women his is a protected class; or if he seek a temporary peace by the diversion of his thoughts from politics or vexed questions, hiding his head like an ostrich in the flowering bushes, peeping into microscopes, and turning rhymes, as a boy whistles to keep his courage up. So is the danger a danger still; so is the fear worse. Manlike let him turn and face it. Let him look into its eye and search its nature, inspect its origin,

—see the whelping of this lion,—which lies no great way back; he will then find in himself a perfect comprehension of its nature and extent; he will have made his hands meet on the other side, and can henceforth defy it and pass on superior. The world is his who can see through its pretension. What deafness, what stone-blind custom, what overgrown error you behold is there only by sufferance,—by your sufferance. See it to be a lie, and you have already dealt it its mortal blow.

33. Yes, we are the cowed,—we the trustless. It is a mischievous notion that we are come late into nature; that the world was finished a long time ago. As the world was plastic and fluid in the hands of God, so it is ever to so much of his attributes as we bring to it. To ignorance and sin, it is flint. They adapt themselves to it as they may; but in proportion as a man has anything in him divine, the firmament flows before him and takes his signet and form. Not he is great who can alter matter, but he who can alter my state of mind. They are the kings of the world who give the color of their present thought to all nature and all art, and persuade men by the cheerful serenity of their carrying the matter, that this thing which they do is the apple which the ages have desired to pluck, now at last ripe, and inviting nations to the harvest. The great man

makes the great thing. Wherever Macdonald sits,° there is the head of the table. Linnæus° makes botany the most alluring of studies, and wins it from the farmer and the herb-woman; Davy,° chemistry; and Cuvier,° fossils. The day is always his who works in it with serenity and great aims. The unstable estimates of men crowd to him whose mind is filled with a truth, as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon.

34. For this self-trust, the reason is deeper than can be fathomed,—darker than can be enlightened. I might not carry with me the feeling of my audience in stating my own belief. But I have already shown the ground of my hope, in adverting to the doctrine that man is one. I believe man has been wronged; he has wronged himself. He has almost lost the light that can lead him back to his prerogatives. Men are become of no account. Men in history, men in the world of to-day, are bugs, are spawn, and are called "the mass" and "the herd." In a century, in a millennium, one or two men; that is to say, one or two approximations to the right state of every man. All the rest behold in the hero or the poet their own green and crude being,—ripened; yes, and are content to be less, so *that* may attain to its full stature. What a testimony, full of grandeur, full of pity, is borne to the demands

of his own nature, by the poor clansman, the poor partisan, who rejoices in the glory of his chief. The poor and the low find some amends to their immense moral capacity, for their acquiescence in a political and social inferiority. They are content to be brushed like flies from the path of a great person, so that justice shall be done by him to that common nature which it is the dearest desire of all to see enlarged and glorified. They sun themselves in the great man's light, and feel it to be their own element. They cast the dignity of man from their down-trod selves upon the shoulders of a hero, and will perish to add one drop of blood to make that great heart beat, those giant sinews combat and conquer. He lives for us, and we live in him.

35. Men such as they are, very naturally seek money or power; and power because it is as good as money,—the "spoils," so called, "of office." And why not? for they aspire to the highest, and this, in their sleep-walking, they dream is highest. Wake them and they shall quit the false good and leap to the true, and leave governments to clerks and desks. This revolution is to be wrought by the gradual domestication of the idea of Culture. The main enterprise of the world for splendor, for extent, is the upbuilding of a man. Here are the materials strewn along the ground. The

private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy, more formidable to its enemy, more sweet and serene in its influence to its friend, than any kingdom in history. For a man, rightly viewed, comprehendeth the particular natures of all men. Each philosopher, each bard, each actor has only done for me, as by a delegate, what one day I can do for myself. The books which once we valued more than the apple of the eye, we have quite exhausted. What is that but saying that we have come up with the point of view which the universal mind took through the eyes of one scribe; we have been that man, and have passed on. First, one, then another, we drain all cisterns, and waxing greater by all these supplies, we crave a better and more abundant food. The man has never lived that can feed us ever. The human mind cannot be enshrined in a person who shall set a barrier on any one side to this unbounded, unboundable empire. It is one central fire, which, flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the capes of Sicily, and now out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars. It is one soul which animates all men.

36. But I have dwelt perhaps tediously upon this abstraction of the Scholar. I ought not to delay longer to add what I have to say of

nearer reference to the time and to this country.

37. Historically, there is thought to be a difference in the ideas which predominate over successive epochs, and there are data for marking the genius of the Classic, of the Romantic,° and now of the Reflective or Philosophical age. With the views I have intimated of the oneness or the identity of the mind through all individuals, I do not much dwell on these differences. In fact, I believe each individual passes through all three. The boy is a Greek; the youth, romantic; the adult, reflective. I deny not, however, that a revolution in the leading idea may be distinctly enough traced.

38. Our age is bewailed as the age of Introversion. Must that needs be evil? We, it seems, are critical; we are embarrassed with second thoughts;° we cannot enjoy anything for hankering to know whereof the pleasure consists; we are lined with eyes; we see with our feet; the time is infected with Hamlet's unhappiness,—

"Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."°

Is it so bad then? Sight is the last thing to be pitied. Would we be blind? Do we fear lest we should outsee nature and God, and drink truth dry? I look upon the discontent of the literary class as a mere announcement of the

fact that they find themselves not in the state of mind of their fathers, and regret the coming state as untried; as a boy dreads the water before he has learned that he can swim. If there is any period one would desire to be born in, is it not the age of Revolution; when the old and the new stand side by side and admit of being compared; when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope; when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era? This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.

39. I read with some joy of the auspicious signs of the coming days, as they glimmer already through poetry and art, through philosophy and science, through church and state.

40. One of these signs is the fact that the same movement° which effected the elevation of what was called the lowest class in the state, assumed in literature a very marked and as benign an aspect. Instead of the sublime and beautiful, the near, the low, the common, was explored and poetized. That which had been negligently trodden under foot by those who were harnessing and provisioning themselves for long journeys into far countries, is suddenly found to be richer than all foreign parts. The literature of the poor, the feelings of the child, the philosophy of the street, the mean-

ing of household life, are the topics of the time. It is a great stride. It is a sign—is it not?—of new vigor when the extremities are made active, when currents of warm life run into the hands and the feet. I ask not for the great, the remote, the romantic; what is doing in Italy or Arabia; what is Greek art, or Provençal minstrelsy°; I embrace the common, I explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low. Give me insight into to-day, and you may have the antique and future worlds. What would we really know the meaning of? The meal in the firkin; the milk in the pan; the ballad in the street; the news of the boat; the glance of the eye; the form and the gait of the body;—show me the ultimate reason of these matters; show me the sublime presence of the highest spiritual cause lurking as always it does lurk, in these suburbs and extremities of nature; let me see every trifle bristling with the polarity that ranges it instantly on an eternal law°; and the shop, the plow, and the ledger referred to the like cause by which light undulates and poets sing;—and the world lies no longer a dull miscellany and lumber-room, but has form and order; there is no trifle, there is no puzzle, but one design unites and animates the farthest pinnacle and the lowest trench.

41. This idea has inspired the genius of

Goldsmith,° Burns,° Cowper,° and, in a newer time, of Goethe,° Wordsworth,° and Carlyle.° This idea they have differently followed and with various success. In contrast with their writing, the style of Pope,° of Johnson,° of Gibbon,° looks cold and pedantic. This writing is blood-warm. Man is surprised to find that things near are not less beautiful and wondrous than things remote. The near explains the far. The drop is a small ocean. A man is related to all nature. This perception of the worth of the vulgar is fruitful in discoveries. Goethe, in this very thing, the most modern of the moderns, has shown us, as none ever did, the genius of the ancients.

42. There is one man of genius who has done much for this philosophy of life, whose literary value has never yet been rightly estimated;—I mean Emanuel Swedenborg.° The most imaginative of men, yet writing with the precision of a mathematician, he endeavored to ingraft a purely philosophical Ethics on the popular Christianity of his time. Such an attempt of course must have difficulty which no genius could surmount. But he saw and showed the connection between nature and the affections of the soul. He pierced the emblematic or spiritual character of the visible, audible, tangible world. Especially did his shade-loving muse hover over and interpret the lower parts

of nature; he showed the mysterious bond that allies moral evil to the foul material forms, and has given in epical parables a theory of insanity, of beasts, of unclean and fearful things.

43. Another sign of our times, also marked by an analogous political movement, is the new importance given to the single person. Everything that tends to insulate the individual—to surround him with barriers of natural respect, so that each man shall feel the world is his, and man shall treat with man as a sovereign state with a sovereign state,—tends to true union as well as greatness. "I learned," said the melancholy Pestalozzi,° "that no man in God's wide earth is either willing or able to help any other man." Help must come from the bosom alone. The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be an university of knowledges. If there be one lesson more than another which should pierce his ear, it is, The world is nothing, the man is all; in yourself is the law of all nature, and you know not yet how a globule of sap ascends; in yourself slumbers the whole of Reason; it is for you to know all; it is for you to dare all. Mr. President and Gentlemen, this confidence in the unsearched might of man belongs, by all motives, by all prophecy, by

all preparation, to the American Scholar. We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. The spirit of the American freeman is already suspected to be timid, imitative, tame. Public and private avarice make the air we breathe thick and fat. The scholar is decent, indolent, complaisant. See already the tragic consequence. The mind of this country, taught to aim at low objects, eats upon itself. There is no work for any but the decorous and the complaisant. Young men of the fairest promise, who begin life upon our shores, inflated by the mountain winds, shined upon by all the stars of God, find the earth below not in unison with these, but are hindered from action by the disgust which the principles on which business is managed inspire, and turn drudges, or die of disgust, some of them suicides. What is the remedy? They did not yet see, and thousands of young men as hopeful now crowding to the barriers for the career do not yet see, that if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him. Patience,—patience; with the shades° of all the good and great for company; and for solace the perspective of your own infinite life; and for work the study and the communication of principles, the making those instincts prevalent, the conversion of the world. Is it

not the chief disgrace in the world, not to be an unit; not to be reckoned one character; not to yield that peculiar fruit which each man was created to bear, but to be reckoned in the gross, in the hundred, or the thousand, of the party, the section, to which we belong; and our opinion predicted geographically, as the north, or the south? Not so, brothers and friends,—please God, ours shall not be so. We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds. The study of letters be no longer a name for pity, for doubt, and for sensual indulgence. The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defense and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men.

NOTES AND QUESTIONS

GIFTS

PAGE 3, l. 8. **chancery:** The word originally designated the office of a chancellor, where records and official documents were kept. Later, in England, it was the name of the highest court of judicature next to the Parliament. Since 1873, the name has been applied to a particular division of the High Court of Justice. In the United States, courts of equity, that is, courts which consider cases of rights, are sometimes called courts of chancery.

PAGE 5, l. 7. **Furies:** These were, in Roman mythology, three goddesses of wrath—Alecto, the unresting, Megæra, the jealous, and Tisiphone, the avenger—who were supposed to hunt up and persecute criminals both before and after death. In Greek mythology they were called Erinyes, or Eumenides.

PAGE 9, l. 19. **Timon.** In Shakspeare's play *Timon of Athens,* Timon relieved the pecuniary distresses of many people and entertained them with great munificence. Having reduced himself to extreme poverty and need, he looked in vain to his former friends for aid. Timon went into self-banishment and died a forlorn death.

l. 28. **Buddhist:** a believer in the religious doctrines, or "good laws," established by a deified religious teacher of the fifth century B. C. There are now about 350,000,000 adherents to this system of religion, living chiefly in central and eastern Asia.

QUESTIONS

(Numbers refer to paragraphs.)

1. Is it difficult for you to choose gifts for your friends? Why?

2. Would the plan of permitting the needy petitioner to decide what you shall give him be practicable?

"The only gift is a portion of thyself." Compare this statement with Lowell's in "The Vision of Sir Launfal," Part II., stanza 8.

3-4. Is it true that "the hand that feeds us is in danger of being bitten? Justify your opinion. When you discover that one is too ready to receive gifts, what change of mind comes to you?

Do we usually carry out the principle of not expecting gratitude or anything else in return for our gifts?

Did you ever hear a remark similar to this, "I sent her a Christmas present, and she has never even thanked me"? Did the remark indicate a wrong spirit in the giver?

5. What do you understand by the "oblique stroke"? Are the greater number of our gifts to others given in this manner?

6. What is the chief condition to avoid in giving and receiving gifts? What must be the basis of unrestricted giving?

MANNERS

PAGE 12, l. 3. **Fiji,** or **Feejee.** Since the publication of this essay, in 1844, these islands have been converted to Christianity. They became a British possession in 1874.

l. 6. **Gournou.** For this description, see Belzoni's *Narrative,* Vol. I., pages 282-285. (See note following.)

l. 18. **Belzoni, Giovanni Battista** (1778-1823): Italian traveler and explorer. His chief field of work was in Egypt, the record of which may be read in *A Narrative of the Operations and Recent Discoveries within the Pyramids,* published in 1822.

l. 22. **Borgoo,** or **Borgu:** a district in West Africa. **Tibboos . . . Bornoos:** tribes of central Africa.

PAGE 13, l. 25. **Chivalry.** See Hallam's *Middle Ages,* Vol. IV., Chapter IX., Part II.

l. 27. **Sir Philip Sidney.** See notes on Sidney under page 39, l. 29 and under "Shakspeare," page 240, line 18.

l. 28. **Sir Walter Scott** (1771-1832). His historical romances are vivid portrayals of the chivalrous character.

PAGE 14, l. 11. **the masonic sign:** that is, the sign of tacit brotherhood.

PAGE 15, l. 5. **correlative abstract:** equivalent term of definition.

PAGE 16, l. 7. **feudal ages.** The feudal system was a political organization with reference to the tenure of land, which prevailed in Europe through the Middle Ages. The land was divided into feuds, or fiefs, held by their owners on condition of the performance of certain duties, especially military service, to a superior lord. It was abandoned in England in 1660.

PAGE 17, l. 5. **Lundy's Lane:** a well-known American victory in the War of 1812, fought on July 25, 1814.

l. 12. **the right Cæsarian pattern:** men of versatile talents, prompt and decisive in action.

PAGE 18, l. 1. **Saladin** (1137-1193): a famous Sultan of Egypt and Syria. His conquest of Jerusalem led to the crusade conducted by Richard the Lion-hearted and Philip II. of France. Scott introduces him in *The Talisman*. **Sapor:** King of Persia from about 310-380. Two other kings of Persia bore this name. **the Cid** (about 1040-1099): the greatest national hero of Spain, famous for his achievements in the wars with the Moors. See note on Cid under "Shakspeare," page 238, line 10.

PAGE 18, l. 2. **Julius Cæsar.** (B. C. 100-44). Roman general, statesman, orator, and writer. **Scipio, Publius Cornelius, Africanus Major** (about B. C. 237-183): a Roman general. **Alexander:** Alexander III., surnamed "The Great" (B.C. 356-323). King of Macedon and renowned conquerer. He was a pupil of Aristotle. His wonderful conquests made him the hero of a cycle of romance in the Middle Ages. **Pericles** (B.C. 495-429): a famous Athenian statesman and author.

l. 21. **Diogenes** (B.C. 412?–323?) a Greek cynic philosopher, famous for his eccentricities. See Smith's *Classical Dictionary*. **Socrates** (B.C. 469–399): a Greek philosopher. He became famous through his persistency in conducting analyses of philosophical ideas in dialogue ("the

Socratic method"). At last he was wrongfully condemned for corrupting the youth by his teaching, and surrounded by his disciples drank hemlock in his prison. **Epaminondas** (about B.C. 418?–362): a noted Theban general and statesman. See note under "Heroism," page 162, line 5.

PAGE 20, l. 11. **Napoleon.** See note under "Compensation," page 193, line 7, and "Self-Reliance," page 144, line 11.

l. 14. **Faubourg St. Germain:** a once fashionable suburb of Paris, and headquarters of the French royalists.

PAGE 21, l. 3. **Cortez** (1485–1547): a Spanish soldier, the conqueror of Mexico. **Nelson, Horatio** (1758-1805): the greatest of English admirals. He died in the battle off Trafalgar.

l. 6. **Marengo:** a village in Italy, celebrated for the battle of June 14, 1800, when Napoleon completed his campaign in northern Italy. **Trafalgar:** a cape on the southern coast of Spain, off which the English fleet, under Nelson, defeated the combined fleets of France and Spain.

PAGE 23, l. 20. **send . . . Coventry:** equivalent to social ostracism. The inhabitants of Coventry at one time held soldiers in such dislike that to "send a soldier into Coventry" meant his exclusion from all society.

PAGE 25, l. 13. **Vich Ian Vohr with his tail on:** Vich Ian Vohr is a chieftain in Scott's *Waverley;* "tail" is a Scottish term for "retinue of a chieftain."

PAGE 26, l. 1. **herald's office:** Herald's College, or College of Arms. See *Century Dictionary,* "herald."

l. 21. **Amphitryon:** Jupiter, in the guise of Amphitryon, gave a banquet. Amphitryon came home and claimed to be master of the house. The servants and guests decided that "he who gave the feast was to them the host."

l. 30. **Tuileries:** a royal residence in Paris, no longer standing. **Escurial** (escorial, preferred form): a building in Spain containing a monastery, palace, church, and mausoleum of Spanish sovereigns.

PAGE 28, l. 1. **Madame de Staël** (1766–1817): a French writer. See note under "Heroism," page 163, line 15.

l. 11. **Montaigne** (1533–1592): a French writer, best known by his essays, in which he analyzes the men of

society of his day in a skeptical spirit. The translation referred to is by William Hazlitt, an English writer.

PAGE 29, l. 12. **Olympus:** the name of a mountain in Macedonia and Thessaly, regarded as the abode of the gods.

PAGE 35, l. 16. **Fox, Charles James** (1749-1806): English statesman and orator. He opposed the taxation of the American colonies, and later demanded the recognition of their independence. He introduced a bill to reform the government of India under Warren Hastings, and defended it stoutly at the cost of his own popularity. It was the subject of the French Revolution that separated Burke and Fox. Burke declared that "dear as was his friend, the love of country was dearer still." He did his duty at the price of Fox's friendship. It was some minutes before Fox could control his emotions sufficiently to reply.

l. 20. **Burke.** See note under "Compensation," page 187, line 16.

l. 29. **Sheridan:** probably Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816), author of *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal.*

PAGE 37, l. 17. **Circe:** an enchantress living on the island Ææa. Men who partook of the charmed cup which she presented were turned into swine. Ulysses, protected by the herb *moly,* which Hermes gave him, partook without harm and then demanded the restoration of his followers who had been transformed previously. See Milton's "Comus," lines 46-55.

l. 22. **Captain Symmes:** the one real character in this group. John Cleve Symmes maintained that there was an enormous opening through the crust of the earth into the globe, at 82° north latitude. The place to which it led, he claimed, was well stocked with animals and plants and lighted by two planets.

PAGE 38, l. 9. **St. Michael's.** The order was instituted by Louis X. in 1469; reorganized in 1661 by Louis XIV. Extinct since 1831.

PAGE 39, l. 16. **Philhellene:** friend of Greece.

l. 28. **Scipio:** See note under page 18, l. 2.

l. 29. **Sidney, Sir Philip:** a man of great beauty of

character, "Sublimely mild, a spirit without spot." He was a favorite of Queen Elizabeth. See note under "The Poet," page 240, line 18.

PAGE 40, l. 11. **As Heaven and Earth are fairer, etc.** See Keats's *Hyperion,* Book II., lines 206 ff.

PAGE 41, l. 21. **Waverley:** the first of Sir Walter Scott's novels (published 1814), from which the series of novels receives its name.

l. 26. **Shakspeare.** See *Life of William Shakespeare,* by Sidney Lee.

PAGE 42, l. 24. **Robin Hood.** See note under "Shakspeare," page 238, line 11.

PAGE 43, l. 19. **Minerva.** See note on same under "Compensation," page 181, line 19. **Juno:** sister and wife of Jupiter. She is the type of matronly virtues and dignity.

l. 20. **Polymnia:** the muse of sacred poetry.

l. 25. **Delphic Sibyl:** one of the ten mythological women reputed to possess powers of prophecy and divination. The most famous was the Cumæan Sibyl.

PAGE 44, l. 8. **Hafiz:** a celebrated Persian poet of the fourteenth century. Emerson translated many of his poems.

l. 9. **Firdousi,** or **Firdusi,** (940-1020): a Persian poet, celebrated for his epic, *Shahnarnah.*

PAGE 45, l. 6. **Byzantine:** a style of architecture developed in the fourth and fifth centuries, which depends much on color for its effect. Mosaics on gold or grounds of positive color are used profusely.

l. 14. **Golden Book:** The Golden Book of Venice recorded the names of all the children of nobles. From these names election to the council was made by golden ballots. Hence the title.

PAGE 47, l. 4. **Schiraz** (or **Shiraz**): a province in Persia, famous for its roses, wine, and nightingales, and celebrated in song by Hafiz and Saadi.

l. 5. **Osman.** "Osman represents in his writings not himself but his better self; an ideal man put in the same circumstances." From *Emerson in Concord,* by E. W. Emerson, page 101.

l. 8. **Koran.** See note on same under "Shakspeare," page 256, line 5.

l. 30. **Silenus:** a Greek divinity, the foster-father of Bacchus.

PAGE 48, l. 3. **Minerva:** a Roman goddess, worshiped as the goddess of wisdom and the patroness of all the arts and trades.

QUESTIONS

1-3. What is the meaning of the word "gentleman" as used here? May it have another meaning?

4. Is strength necessary in a gentleman? Does strength make one a gentleman?

5. Is wealth necessary to the making of a gentleman? Is Emerson's view the usual one?

6. Are fine manners essential? Do they prove the possessor a gentleman?

7. Who devote themselves most to fashion? Does observation lead you to agree with Emerson?

8. Would it be well if we could do away with the fashionable class? Is this classification assumed merely? Can any one, by resolving to conform, enter the fashionable class of society?

9. Wherein do people misjudge the requirements of fashionable society?

10. Have you noticed these "chamberlains of the lesser gods"?

11. Does this basis of good manners seem firm and true? Are good manners natural, or artificial?

13. What does Emerson mean by, "Let us sit apart . . . Olympus"?

14. What is the relation between keen perception and good manners? Why are people with "sharp points of character" not successful in society?

15. What state of mind aids sociability?

16. Are heartiness and sympathy as important as the author seems to think them?

17. Are all members of the best society people of strength, fashion, intellect, taste, and sympathy? What is the basis of true courtesy?

18. What distinguishes the gentleman from the man of mere fashion?

19. What relation have manners to character? Which is more to be desired, beauty of manners or physical beauty? Will habitual experience in good society always result in good manners?

20. What is the high office of woman in society? How may she discharge her duty?

21. May fashion become a burden? What determines one's view of fashion?

22. What is meant by *good manners?* Wherein are the fashions and manners of our time in need of change?

FRIENDSHIP

PAGE 52, l. 25. **Apollo:** one of the Olympian gods, the son of Zeus (Jupiter). He was the god of art, poetry, and music, and the leader of the Muses. Apollo was also the ideal of manly grace and beauty.

l. 26. **Muses:** In Greek mythology the Muses were the nine daughters of Zeus who presided over song, the various forms of poetry, the arts, and the sciences. The names of the Muses were Calliope, Clio, Erato, Euterpe, Melpomene, Polymnia, Terpsichore, Thalia, and Urania.

PAGE 53, l. 7. **"crush the sweet poison of misusèd wine."** The quotation is from Milton's "Comus," line 47.

l. 25. **systole and diastole:** Systole is the contraction of the heart by which the blood is forced onward. Diastole is the dilation of the heart which follows each contraction.

PAGE 54, l. 11. **Elysian:** filled with the highest happiness. Elysium, often called the Elysian Fields, was, in Greek mythology, the abode of the blessed after death. It was represented as a place of perfect delight.

l. 21. **Egyptian skull at our banquet.** The allusion is, doubtless, to an Egyptian custom mentioned in Plutarch's *Morals of Osiris and Isis*, section 17. The account tells us that at a feast the likeness of a dead man was carried about and shown to the guests. There are two interpretations of the purpose of the custom: one that it

might heighten the gayety from the thought that all would soon be, like the image, unable to engage in the festivities of life; the other, that the sight of the image of death might keep the revellers within proper bounds. The author here thinks of it in the latter sense.

PAGE 57, l. 23. **The valiant warrior,** etc. The quotation is from Shakspeare's *Twenty-fifth Sonnet.*

PAGE 58, l. 4. ***naturlangsamkeit:*** a German word meaning slowness, deliberation.

PAGE 59, l. 14. **like an Olympian:** with the solemn sense of dignity, responsibility, and honor which a Greek has when about to take part in the Olympian games.

PAGE 61, l. 16. **paradox:** a seeming contradiction, which, carefully considered, will be found consistent and true.

PAGE 73, l. 10. **Janus-faced:** The meaning here is simply two-faced. The word often means deceitful. Janus was a Roman divinity, doorkeeper of heaven, and patron of the beginning and the end of undertakings. As god of the rising and the setting sun, he is represented with one face looking toward the east and the other toward the west.

PAGE 75, l. 5. **empyrean:** the region of pure light. The highest heaven, where the ancients supposed the element of fire to exist.

QUESTIONS

1. Is this a wise mental attitude toward one's fellowmen? What is likely to result from the opposite view?

3. Does personal relation affect the nature of conversation as well as the readiness of utterance?

4-5. Is this valuation of friendship and affection too high? Do high ideals of human relations tend to ennoble the one who has them?

6. Are all people capable of such unselfish and exalted thought about their friends as Emerson had?

7. Do we usually rate our friends as superior to ourselves?

8. Why do some friendships fail to continue on the delightful plane of their beginning?

10. Do you find here any suggestion on the forming of a friendship?

12. What is the author's full meaning of the word "truth," as here used to denote an element of friendship?

13. How is the second element of friendship to be manifested? How may you distinguish true friendship from a mere alliance?

14. Are friendships as few as the author suggests? Does a third person restrict conversation?

15. What condition is necessary to excellent conversation between two persons?

16. What is Emerson objecting to in the expression "a mush of concession"? Do you enjoy this in a companion?

17. Is it not within our power to choose our friends? Must one be blind to the faults of his friend?

18. Does this describe a distant friendship? Too distant? Is it necessary for friends to meet?

20. What enables two persons to become friends?

21. Do we fix the standard of our friendships?

22. On what plane should our friendships be?

23. What does Emerson consider of more importance than the conversation of friends? Does he teach discourtesy?

24. Do you think a one-sided friendship possible?

CHARACTER

PAGE 76, l. 1. **Lord Chatham,** William Pitt (1759-1806): a celebrated Whig statesman and noted orator.

l. 5. **our brilliant English historian:** Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881).

l. 6. **Mirabeau, Comte de** (1749-1791): the greatest orator of the French Revolution.

l. 8. **The Gracchi:** Caius and Tiberius Gracchus, famous Roman orators and reformers in the time of the Roman Republic. They championed the cause of the

poorer classes. **Agis** (died B.C. 240): a king of Sparta. **Cleomenes III:** King of Sparta (B.C. 235-220).

l. 9. **Plutarch.** See note under "Shakspeare," page 230, line 24.

l. 11. **Earl of Essex:** favorite of Queen Elizabeth. Courtier and earl marshal of England. **Sir Walter Raleigh.** See note under "Shakspeare," page 240, line 19.

l. 15. **Schiller, Johann Christoph Friedrich von** (1759-1805): a celebrated poet, dramatist, and historian of Germany. *Maria Stuart* and *Wilhelm Tell* are among his greatest works.

PAGE 77, l. 2. **Genius.** See Question 1 on "Self-Reliance."

l. 16. **Iole:** daughter of Eurytus, beloved by Hercules. For the story, see Smith's *Classical Dictionary*.

l. 17. **Hercules:** the god of physical strength and courage. See the twelve labors of Hercules, Smith's *Classical Dictionary* or Gayley's *Classic Myths*.

l. 20. **Theseus:** the chief hero of Attica in Greek legend. He captured the Marathonian bull, slew the Minotaur, was one of the Argonauts, and cut off the head of Medusa.

PAGE 79, l. 10. **Napoleon.** See note under essay on "Compensation," page 193, line 7.

PAGE 81, l. 9. **Concini, Concino de':** marshal and marquis of France, a Florentine adventurer who came to France in 1600 in the suite of Maria de' Medici. He soon rose to power, and was made marshal of France when Maria became queen. His wife was accused of Judaism, corruption, and sorcery, and finally burned in 1617. The family denied the charges against her, and declared the only sorcery she had employed toward the queen was "the power of a strong mind over a weak one."

l. 10. **Mary of Medici.** Maria de' Medici, (1573-1642): Queen of France as wife of Henry IV., and regent during the minority of Louis XIII.

l. 12. **Cæsar, Julius.** See note under "Manners," page 18, line 2.

l. 18. **Toussaint L'Ouverture** (1743–1813): a Haitian revolutionist. He rose from a negro slave to deputy governor and commander in chief and finally real ruler of the western part of the island.

PAGE 83, l. 19. **Everything in nature is bipolar.** See essay on "Compensation," page 172, paragraph 7. "Polarity, or action and reaction," etc.

PAGE 84, l. 19. **Neptune**: god of the sea and of all waters. **Hecate**: a mysterious divinity representing the darkness and terrors of night, and goddess of sorcery and witchcraft.

l. 20. **Eumenides.** See note on Furies under the essay on "Gifts," page 5, line 7.

l. 21. **Catholic Purgatory.** See "purgatory" in *Century Dictionary*. **Calvinistic Judgment-day**: the view of the last judgment of God's moral government as believed by John Calvin (1509-1564), a French Protestant reformer and theologian.

PAGE 87, l. 14. **Fox, Henry Richard Vassall (Lord Holland)** 1773-1840: an English politician.

l. 18. **Xenophon** (B.C. 434?–355?): celebrated Greek historian and essayist. He was in the expedition of Cyrus the Younger in 401 B.C., and became leader of ten thousand Greeks in a famous march to the Black Sea.

PAGE 91, l. 25. **Riemer, Friedrich W.** (1774-1845): a German scholar and writer; at one time tutor in the family of Goethe.

l. 26. **Goethe.** See note under "Shakspeare," page 241, line 23.

l. 28. **Stilling,** pseudonym for Johann Heinrich Jung (1740-1817): an original German mystic writer and a friend of Goethe. **Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich** (1770-1831): a German philosopher.

l. 29. **Tischbein, Johann Heinrich Wilhelm** (1751-1829): a German historical painter.

l. 30. **Voss, Johann Heinrich** (1751-1826): a German poet and philologist.

PAGE 92, l. 1. **Herder, Johann Gottfried von** (1744-1803): a German philosopher. **Meyer, Hans Heinrich** (1760-1832): a German writer on art.

l. 9. **Eckermann, Johann Peter** (1792-1854): a German author.

PAGE 94, l. 9. **Æschylus** (B.C. 525-456): a Greek tragic poet. Although said to have written seventy tragedies, but seven are extant. *Prometheus Bound* is among the best known. **Dante.** See note on same under essay on "Compensation," page 183, line 25.

l. 12. **Patmos:** an island in the Ægean Sea, where, tradition says, St. John saw the vision. See *Revelation* i. 9.

PAGE 96, l. 9. **the Apollo.** Apollo has been a favorite subject among artists. The most famous sculpture, however, is the Apollo Belvedere, the work of an unknown Roman artist, of about the first century of our era. It is called Belvedere from the name of the apartment of the Pope's palace at Rome in which it is placed. **the Jove:** The reference is to the ivory and gold statue of Olympian Jove by Phidias. Knowledge of this statue is confined to literary descriptions and to copies on coins.

l. 24. **Zertusht** or **Zoroaster:** a Persian philosopher, founder of the Magian religion, which teaches that the universe is the scene of a conflict between two principles,—the good, called Ormuzd, and the evil, called Ahriman. This religion degenerated into the worship of fire and the sun. The time in which Zoroaster lived is not ascertained. Some authors conjecture that he lived about 1500 B.C.

l. 25. **Yunani:** Persian for Greek. This story is from *The Desatic or Sacred Writings of the Ancient Persian Prophets,* page 120, section 43. **Balkh:** the chief city of Balkh, a province in central Asia, corresponding to the ancient Bactria, which is associated with the history of Zoroaster.

l. 26. **Gushtasp:** a king of the Bactrian dynasty of Karja, and a zealous propagator of the religion of Zoroaster.

l. 27. **Mobeds:** one of the three orders of Parsee priests.

l. 29. **Yezdam:** a city of Persia.

PAGE 97, l. 4. **Plato.** See note under "Self-Reliance," page 103, line 24. "Shakspeare," page 250, line 21.

l. 9. **John Bradshaw** (1602-1659): an English judge and politician. He became famous as a regicide.

l. 10. **Milton.** See note under "Self-Reliance," page 103, line 24.

PAGE 101, l. 18. **Tyburn:** a tributary of the Thames in old London. "Tyburn Tree" was the public gallows until 1783, when the executions were transferred to Newgate.

QUESTIONS

1. May one be great in talent, but not in character? In character, but not in talent?

2. What is the highest qualification in a representative? Why?

3. Are men "born to success" in certain callings and to failure in others? Is there such a person as a "self-made man"?

4. What point is aimed at in citing Toussaint and Washington?

5. Why do we feel the presence of one person more than another?

6. Who are least willing to hear of their faults? "No change . . . character." Does this sentence mean that one cannot improve in character? (Read paragraphs 13 and 14.)

7. Which of the so-called "terrors" discussed in "Self-Reliance" is mentioned here?

9. Why do most reforms fail?

10. Is it wise to be optimistic? Shall we cherish our displeasures?

11. What is the true measure of benevolence? Does benevolence prove high character?

12-13. How is character exalted in these paragraphs?

14. What is the essential condition to the possession of high character? Does he think, with Macaulay in his *Essay on Milton,* that the best poetry is produced in an uncivilized age?

16-18. Do you think Emerson exaggerates the power of personal influence?

21. How may we know excellence of character when we meet it? How should we treat it?

SELF-RELIANCE

PAGE 103, l. 24. **Plato** (B.C. 427–347): the foremost Greek philosopher. In *Representative Men* Emerson makes Plato the typical philosopher. **Milton, John** (1608-1674): great English poet, prose writer, and Latin secretary during the Commonwealth.

PAGE 106, l. 3. **Chaos:** This originally meant to the Greeks the unfathomable abyss, the first of all things; later, the confused mass of material from which arose the forms of things. Emerson here uses the word to indicate extreme disorder.

l. 9. **these.** To what does this word relate?

l. 14. **four or five.** What word is omitted?

l. 30. **pit:** in the English theater, formerly, the low-priced places were on the first floor, below the level of the stage. During the play, the plain and often unrefined people who occupied the "pit" were accustomed to call out their opinions of the performance. It is this independence of conduct which Emerson here thinks of as the point of comparison.

PAGE 107, l. 11. **eclat:** brilliancy of conduct. A word borrowed from the French.

l. 15. **Lethe.** According to Greek mythology, the souls of worthy personages went after death to the Elysian Fields. Along the borders of this happy country flowed the river Lethe, from whose waters those who were to return to earth drank oblivion of their former lives.

PAGE 108, l. 9. **explore if it be goodness.** Compare with this St. Paul's words in 1 *Thessalonians* v. 21.

PAGE 109, l. 10. **Barbadoes:** a densely populated Caribbean island. Negro slavery was abolished in the island in 1834.

l. 25. ***Whim:*** "Better be considered eccentric than to spend time in explaining one's conduct."

PAGE 112, l. 4. **But do your work and I shall know you.** Compare this with *Matthew* vii. 16, 20.

l. 19. **airs of the bench:** assumed manners of an impartial judge.

PAGE 114, l. 29. **as Joseph his coat.** See *Genesis* xxxix. 12.

PAGE 115, l. 9. **Pythagoras** (about B.C. 582-500): a Greek philosopher, who, with his followers, suffered severe persecution at the hands of the misguided populace.

l. 11. **Socrates.** See note under "Manners," page 18, line 21.

l. 12. **Martin Luther** (1483-1546): German reformer. He was excommunicated for his opposition to certain abuses of the church, and became the great leader of the Protestant Reformation. **Copernicus** (1473-1543): Polish astronomer. Borrowing his ideas from others, probably from Pythagoras, Copernicus did much to establish the fact that the sun is the center of the planetary system. The Ptolemaic system, which had long been accepted, made the earth the central and fixed body. **Galileo** (1564-1642): an Italian astronomer, who discovered the rings of Saturn and the satellites of Jupiter, and in some important sense established experimental science. He was tried and punished on the charge of heresy, for supporting the Copernican theory.

l. 13. **Newton, Sir Isaac** (1642-1727): the English mathematician and philosopher who discovered and proved the law of gravitation.

l. 22. **Alexandrian stanza.** It is difficult to understand how the author came to use this erroneous illustration. Neither the acrostic nor the Alexandrine stanza has the form described. A *palindrome* has this form. It is said that when asked whether he could have invaded England, Napoleon replied, "Able was I ere I saw Elba." This is a palindrome.

PAGE 117, l. 6. **Chatham's voice.** William Pitt, Earl of Chatham (1708-1778), called "The Great Commoner," was a distinguished English orator and statesman.

l. 7. **Adams:** probably the reference is to Samuel

Adams (1722-1803). He was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and a leader in the cause of American freedom. It is possible, however, that the reference may be to John Adams.

l. 19. **Spartan fife.** The Spartans were noted for their great courage. The expression here is equivalent to a summons to courageous thought and conduct.

PAGE 118, l. 20. **St. Anthony** (251-356), also called Anthony of Thebes. He was the Egyptian founder of monastic seclusion.

l. 21. **Fox, George** (1624-1691): English founder of the society of Friends, or Quakers.

l. 22. **Wesley, John** (1703-1791): English founder of Methodism.

l. 23. **Clarkson, Thomas** (1760-1846): English philanthropist and opponent of slavery. **Scipio** (B.C. 237–183): Roman general who defeated the Carthaginians under Hannibal. For the quotation see *Paradise Lost,* Book IX., line 610.

PAGE 119, l. 14. **That popular fable.** The fable may be found in *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments,* under *Abou Hassam; or, The Sleeper Awakened.*

The same trick is used by Shakspeare in *The Taming of the Shrew,* Introduction, Scene 2. Also see Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy,* II. 2, 4.

PAGE 120, l. 1. **Alfred the Great** (849-901): King of the West Saxons, writer of early Saxon chronicles, and a great patron of learning. **Scanderbeg (George Castriota)** (1404-1467): a native of Epirus. He was captured and reared by the Sultan of the Turks, deserted from the Turkish service, returned to his own people, became the chief of the Albanians and leader against the Turks. He was a convert to Christianity and a man of great virtue.

l. 2. **Gustavus Adolphus** (1594-1632): King of Sweden. In the Thirty Years' War, he was the hero of Protestantism.

l. 29. **parallax:** the angle used in computing the distance of a star. The greater the distance of the heavenly body, the smaller the angle.

PAGE 125, l. 14. **worship of the past.** This call to progress is one of Emerson's great themes. Notice this in "The American Scholar."

PAGE 126, l. 18. **texts.** Emerson does not discredit the writers of the Scriptures. What, then, is his thought?

PAGE 129, l. 25. **shoes from off their feet:** Before entering a mosque, a Mohammedan removes his shoes. See also *Exodus* iii. 5.

PAGE 131, l. 2. **Thor and Woden:** Scandinavian deities. Woden was their chief god, and Thor, god of thunder, was his son.

PAGE 132, l. 8. **truth . . . last.** See *John* viii. 32.

l. 17. **antinomianism.** The sect of Antinomians originated in Germany about the year 1535. They believe that the Gospel does away with the binding force of moral law, and that faith alone is necessary.

PAGE 134, l. 23. **Stoic:** Zeno, a Greek philosopher, taught that men should live free from passion, should be unaffected by joy or sorrow, and should submit, without complaint, to misfortune.

l. 28. **word made flesh.** See *John* i. 14.

l. 29. **healing to the nations.** See *Revelation* xxii. 2.

PAGE 136, l. 3. **Caratach.** In the tragedy he is the historical Caractacus (about A.D. 50), a British king. He fell into the hands of the Romans, but was pardoned by Claudius.

PAGE 137, l. 1. **Zoroaster:** founder of the Perso-Iranian religion called Zoroastrianism. There are still many representatives of this religion in India.

l. 7. **"Let not God,"** etc. Not an exact quotation. See *Exodus* xx. 19; and *Deuteronomy* v. 25-27.

l. 13. **Locke, John** (1632-1704): English philosopher who wrote the *Essay on the Human Understanding*. He also constructed an ideal constitution for the Carolina colony in America. **Lavoisier** (1743-1794): leading founder of the modern science of chemistry. He discovered the composition of water. **Hutton, James** (1726-1797): Scotch philosopher and geologist, and author of *Theory of the Earth*. **Bentham, Jeremy** (1748-1832): noted

English jurist and writer. He did much to improve English legal practice.

l. 14. **Fourier** (1772-1837): founder of a social system in France. His socialistic plan was to organize the population in associations, each large enough to carry on for itself all of the industries.

l. 23. **Calvinism**: the theological doctrines of John Calvin (1509-1564), a French reformer. **Quakerism**: the peculiar tenets and manners of the Friends, or Quakers. See previous note on *Fox, George,* page 118, line 21.

l. 24. **Swedenborgism**: a system of belief founded by the Swedish theosophist, Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772).

PAGE 139, l. 15. **Thebes**: a now ruined city of Egypt.

l. 16. **Palmyra**: a very ancient city, now in ruins, on an oasis in the Syrian desert.

l. 26. **Vatican**: the palatial residence of the Pope at Rome. It is noted for its great library and its rare collection of works of art.

PAGE 140, l. 16. **Doric**: one of the three forms of Greek architecture. What are its chief features? **Gothic**: a form of mediæval architecture prevalent in western Europe. What are its chief features?

PAGE 141, l. 5. **Shakspeare, William** (1564-1616): greatest of English dramatists. Note the frequency of Emerson's references to him. Also see "Shakspeare; or, The Poet," in this volume.

l. 6. **Franklin, Benjamin** (1706-1790). In what offices did he serve the American colonies? What scientific discovery did he make? What did he write? **Washington, George** (1732-1799). What important writing did he leave to the nation? What life of Washington are you familiar with?

l. 7. **Bacon, Francis** (1561-1626): English philosopher, statesman, and writer. Have you read any of his *Essays*? **Newton, Sir Isaac** (1642-1727): English scientist and mathematician.

l. 8. **Scipio.** See note under essay on "Heroism," page 160, l. 8.

l. 14. **Phidias** (B.C. 500?-432?): a noted Greek sculptor.

l. 16. **Moses**: the lawgiver of Israel, supposed author of the *Pentateuch*. **Dante** (1265-1321): the greatest of Italian poets. There are excellent English translations of his great work, *The Divine Comedy*.

l. 25. **Foreworld**: the word here means an ideal condition of the world.

PAGE 142, l. 25. **Greenwich nautical almanac**: This contains data for the use of navigators and astronomers.

PAGE 143, l. 17. **Plutarch** (46?-120?). He wrote, among other things, a very important series of Greek and Roman biographies. Emerson frequently refers to him.

l. 19. **Phocion** (B.C. 402-317): Athenian commander and statesman.

l. 20. **Anaxagoras** (B.C. 500-426): a Greek philosopher. **Diogenes** (B.C. 412?–323?): a Greek cynic philosopher.

l. 27. **Hudson, Henry** (?-1611): English navigator and explorer. Discoverer of the Hudson River. **Bering (Behring), Vitus** (1680-1741): Danish explorer, and the discoverer of Bering sea.

l. 29. **Parry, Sir William Edward** (1790-1855): English explorer in the Arctic sea. **Franklin, Sir John** (1786-1847?): English Arctic explorer.

PAGE 144, l. 1. **Galileo** (1564-1642): Italian astronomer. See note page 115, line 12.

l. 11. **Napoleon Bonaparte** (1769-1821): Emperor of the French and great military genius. He met final defeat by the allied powers of Europe under the command of Wellington at Waterloo, in Belgium. He died in banishment on the island of St. Helena. Read the essay on Napoleon in *Representative Men*.

l. 15. **Las Casas** (properly Cases), **Comte de** (1766-1842). He was with Napoleon at St. Helena, and wrote from dictation a part of his memoirs.

PAGE 145, l. 21. **Caliph** (Calif) **Ali** (about 602-661): cousin, adopted son, and son-in-law, of the prophet Mohammed. He was the fourth Arabian Calif, or successor of Mohammed.

PAGE 146, l. 24. **her wheel rolls.** By the ancients

Fortune was sometimes represented with a ball, indicating the varying unsteadiness of fortune. She was worshiped both in Italy and Greece.

QUESTIONS

1. Does Emerson's definition of genius express your idea? Compare with it the following:

"Genius is mainly an affair of energy."—*Matthew Arnold.*

"Genius is nothing but a great capacity for patience."—*Buffon.*

"Genius is nothing but labor and diligence."—*Hogarth.*

"Genius is a nervous disease."—*De Tours.*

"Genius is that in whose power a man is."—*Lowell.*

"Genius is the power of carrying the feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood."—*Coleridge.*

In what particular does the author advise us to practice self-reliance?

2. Does envy spring from ignorance?

3. Do the last three sentences give satisfactory answers to the two important questions, how to succeed and how to be happy?

4. In the last sentence does the author encourage youthful boldness?

5. How is one to avoid this being "clapped into jail"?

6. Is this criticism of society too severe?

7. Does Emerson think that "charity should begin at home"? Is he lacking in human sympathy? How did he live in this respect? Is his position right?

8. Does he think men should be judged by their actions?

9. Does the author mean that we should disregard the opinions of others? Should we?

10. How does over-conformity injure man? Are you conscious of ever having worn the "foolish face of praise"?

11. What are the consequences of nonconformity?

12. What has he mentioned as the first terror?

13-14. What is worse than being misunderstood?

15. "Character teaches above our wills." Explain the thought and discuss its importance.

16. Which is the easier way, always to "do right now," or to follow the consistent course? Which the better? What is the true source of personal power?

17. "An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man." Has any illustration of this come to your notice?

18-19. What is the point to the exhortation in these paragraphs? Note his view of the dignity of an ordinary life.

25. Must each find out his own way without help from the experience of others?

29. Does this relation to others imply an unsocial nature?

33. Are there no great persons? What kind of men and women are wanted?

34. Is the thought in the first three sentences true? In the next three? What gives the "sturdy lad" such worth?

37. What practical thought in the words, "The secret of fortune is joy in our hands"?

38. Note Emerson's enthusiasm for the unfolding of a self-reliant mind.

39-41. Does he condemn foreign travel? Did he travel abroad? More than once?

42. What is the bearing of this discussion about travel upon the theme of the essay? Does our educational system foster restlessness?

43. In what sense should we not imitate?

45-48. Is it true that society never advances? Does the harm of improved machinery offset the good?

49. Do we estimate people more often by what they have than by what they are?

50. What does Emerson mean by saying, "Nothing can bring you peace but yourself"?

HEROISM

PAGE 148, l. 3. **elder English dramatists.** Who were other early dramatists? See outline of the English drama

in notes to "Shakspeare; or, the Poet," page 230, line 11.

ll. 4, 5. **Beaumont, Francis** (1586?-1616), **Fletcher, John** (1579-1625): English dramatists who wrote plays conjointly. Several plays attributed to Beaumont and Fletcher were written by the latter after Beaumont's death.

l. 9. **Rodrigo, Pedro, Valerio:** names of dramatic characters often used by the early dramatists.

ll. 15-17. ***Bonduca, Sophocles, The Mad Lover, The Double Marriage:*** three are the names of plays by Beaumont and Fletcher. The second, Sophocles, is the name of a character in *The Triumph of Honor.*

PAGE 149, l. 8. **Ariadne's crown.** Ariadne was the daughter of Minos of Crete. After being abandoned by the faithless Theseus, she was saved by Dionysus. Because of her great beauty, Dionysus married her, raised her to a place among the immortals, and placed her crown among the stars.

PAGE 150, ll. 23-24. **Laodamia, "Dion."** Emerson thought these short poems worth reading. What is there in each to justify his judgment?

ll. 26, 27. **Lord Evandale** and **Balfour of Burley** are characters in Walter Scott's novel, *Old Mortality.* Evandale is an unselfish, honorable officer of the Life Guards; Balfour, the crafty, cruel leader of the Covenanters. Find in the novel the portrait referred to by Emerson. **Thomas Carlyle** (1795-1881): a Scottish essayist and historian; a personal and literary friend of Emerson. How was the friendship formed? Had it any literary consequence?

l. 31. **Robert Burns** (1759-1796): Scottish lyric poet. Can you discuss intelligently his "Cotter's Saturday Night" or others of his best poems?

l. 33. **Harleian Miscellanies:** a collection of old manuscripts published in 1744-1746. The publication is named from Robert Harley (1661-1724), an English statesman, the original collector of these and other rare manuscripts now in the British Museum.

PAGE 151, l. 1. **Lutzen.** Two important battles have been fought there. Which one is here referred to?

l. 2. **Simon Ockley** (1678-1720): an English Orientalist, whose chief work is here mentioned.

l. 9. **Plutarch.** See note under "Self-Reliance," page 143, line 17.

l. 16. **Stoicism.** See note on Stoic, "Self-Reliance," page 134, line 23.

PAGE 152, l. 28. **Heroism.** Observe the author's attempt to define heroism.

PAGE 154, l. 27. **Plotinus:** an Egyptian philosopher of the third century A.D., who so exalted the powers of the mind that he was said to be ashamed of his body. Thinking his physical self unworthy of portraiture, he refused to sit for a noted painter.

PAGE 157, l. 28. **Ibn Hankal** (properly Hankul) (died A.D. 976): Oriental traveller and writer. *Highways and Countries*, his account of twenty years of travel, was translated in the year 1800 by Sir William Ousley. The translated work is called *The Oriental Geography of Ibn Hankul.*

PAGE 159, l. 8. **John Eliot** (1604-1690): well known in American colonial history as "The Apostle to the Indians." He wrote a grammar and a catechism, and translated the Bible, in the Indian language.

l. 13. **king David.** See 1 *Chronicles* xi. 15-19.

l. 17. **Brutus, Marcus Junius** (B.C. 85-42): one of the assassins of Julius Cæsar. He was reputed for his high sense of honor.

l. 18. **battle of Philippi.** Between the friends of Cæsar and those who had assassinated him. Compare the death of Brutus in Shakspeare's *Julius Cæsar.*

l. 19. **Euripides** (B.C. 480-406): Athenian tragic poet.

PAGE 160, l. 8. **Scipio, Publius Cornelius, Africanus Major** (B.C. 237–183): Roman general who defeated Hannibal at Zama. He was accused of the misuse of public money and indignantly destroyed his accounts, the only proof of his honesty.

l. 11. **Socrates** (B.C. 469–399): Athenian philosopher. See note under "Manners," page 18, line 21.

l. 13. **Prytaneum:** a public hall at Athens where official hospitality was extended to distinguished guests.

l. 14. **Sir Thomas More** (1478-1535): English statesman and author. He was beheaded in the reign of Henry VIII.

PAGE 161, l. 3. **Blue-Laws:** "Rules of righteousness" were common in the colonial governments of New England. New Haven has been especially noted for its Blue Laws, probably because the Bible was, for a time, its only book of laws, and the source of judicial authority.

PAGE 162, l. 5. **Epaminondas** (B.C. 418?-362): noted Theban general, who defeated the Spartans at Leuctra and at Mantinea, and raised Thebes to the position of supremacy in Greece. He was distinguished for integrity and uprightness of private life.

l. 16. **Pericles** (B.C. 495?-429): great Athenian statesman and orator. **Xenophon:** See note under "Character," page 87, l. 18.

l. 17. **Bayard:** The reference is, doubtless, to Chevalier de Bayard (1475?-1524), the French national hero known as "the knight without fear and without reproach." He was distinguished in the Italian campaigns of Charles VIII. and Louis XII. **Sidney:** probably Algernon Sidney (1622?-1683), English patriot and politician, parliamentary leader of the Independents. He was falsely accused of treason and beheaded, in the time of the Rye House Plot, with which he had no connection. **Hampden, John** (1594-1643): English statesman, active in Parliament in the time of Charles I., and a vigorous opponent of the king.

PAGE 163, l. 3. **Colossus:** one of the seven wonders of the world. This was a gigantic statue at the entrance to the harbor of Rhodes. It was erected to represent Phœbus, the national deity of the Rhodians, and was probably ninety feet in height. It was completed in B.C. 280 and destroyed by an earthquake sixty years afterward.

l. 15. **Sappho** (about B.C. 600): celebrated Greek poetess, sometimes called "the tenth muse." Nearly all of her nine books of lyrical poems have been lost. **Sévigné,**

Marquise de (1626-1696): French author. She is noted especially as a letter writer. **Staël Madame de** (1766–1817): noted French writer. The first edition of one of her works was destroyed, probably by Napoleon's order. He exiled her from France in 1812-1814.

l. 18. **Themis:** a Greek goddess who personified law, order, and the right.

PAGE 164, l. 28. **Phocion** (B.C. 402–317): distinguished Athenian general, statesman, and leader of the aristocratic party. He recommended peace with Philip of Macedon. When Alexander seized the Piræus, Phocion was accused of treason and condemned by the Athenians to drink the hemlock.

PAGE 166, l. 13. **demands her champion:** By a custom of chivalry, one condemned to death might demand a champion who should try by duel the justness or unjustness of the sentence. If the prisoner's champion won, the condemned person was set free. The trial of Rebecca in *Ivanhoe* is a full account of the custom.

l. 15. **Lovejoy, Elijah Parish** (1802-1837): American clergyman and journalist. For publishing articles against negro slavery, he was killed by a mob at Alton, Illinois.

PAGE 167, l. 14. **"Let them rave,"** etc. An imperfect quotation from Tennyson's "A Dirge." The first line is the refrain of the poem. The second line seems to be Emerson's own, expressing the central thought of the whole poem.

QUESTIONS

1. Is Emerson's observation on the early English drama sustained by the quotation from *The Triumph of Honor*?

2. Is your reading sufficiently extensive to enable you to agree or disagree with the author's opinions of the literature and writers mentioned? What is the point of contrast between early and recent literature?

3-4. What sort of books does he commend? How is life a festival to the wise? Does Emerson believe in the law of heredity? What practical conclusion in the fourth paragraph is drawn from the thought in the third?

5. What is heroism? What are the characteristics of a hero?

6. Cite instances of great and good men being opposed. Is it true that "every heroic act measures itself by contempt of some external good"?

7. Contrast the heroic and the unheroic man. Does the thought concern only those of exceptional position and talents?

8. Does the central teaching agree with Lowell's in the closing stanzas of "The Vision of Sir Launfal"?

9. What do you find said here on temperate living? What is the point in the two citations of men?

11. How does each case cited prove the author's point?

12. Why are stories of heroism valuable? Does environment make the great man? What is the meaning of "Let us find room for this great guest in our small houses"?

13. Are there such young men as are here described? Is the observation discouraging? Is the young woman likely to find discouragement in the author's word to her? Is heroism possible to ordinary lives?

14. Does the author's counsel lead toward haughtiness and egotism? Was not Phocion wrong?

15. What is the ground of a valid apology?

16. How may human sympathy be exercised?

17. Have all people the opportunity to be heroic?

18. What is the best preparation for heroic action?

19. May the ending of life be a desired good? Does the author find in heroism a proof of immortality?

COMPENSATION

PAGE 170, l. 25. **doubloons:** gold coins of Spain and the Spanish-American States, originally worth about $16.00.

PAGE 172, l. 13. **Polarity:** the variation of certain physical properties so that they are opposite or contrasted, in opposite or contrasted directions or positions.

PAGE 173, l. 18. **The theory of the mechanic forces.** See *Century Dictionary* under "compensation."

l. 21. **The periodic or compensating errors of the planets:** According to Lagrange's theory of the stability

of the solar system, every orbit will undergo continual changes of eccentricity (or distance from center to center) and of inclination, but the eccentricity and inclination of the solar system, regarded as a whole, remains constant.

PAGE 174, l. 7. **they are increased:** Their needs or desires increased with the power to satisfy them.

PAGE 175, l. 10. **overlooks thousands . . . eminence:** He who has risen above the multitude must pay for his elevation by the increase of his responsibility.

l. 20. **a byword and a hissing.** A word from personal experience. Emerson had paid this price for faithfulness to truth as he conceived it.

l. 24. ***Res nolunt . . . administrari.*** The preceding sentence is the translation.

PAGE 177, l. 5. **The world globes itself in a drop of dew.** The same law controls the shape of both.

l. 13. **The true doctrine . . . cobweb.** Emerson has been called a pantheist. Note other similar statements in this essay.

l. 22. **"It is in the world . . . it."** See *John* i. 1-10.

l. 24. Οἱ κύβοι, etc. The following sentence is the translation.

PAGE 180, l. 11. **"Drive out nature with a fork . . ."** The origin of this proverb is unknown. It is quoted by Horace in his epistles, and referred to by other classical writers of antiquity.

PAGE 181, l. 8. **"How secret art thou,"** etc. St. Augustine's *Confessions,* Book I., 18.

l. 17. **Prometheus:** originally, god of fire and friend of man. Having stolen fire from heaven to benefit man, he was chained to a rock and a vulture set to prey upon his liver. He resolutely refused release from this suffering, which could be obtained only by revealing to Jove the means by which he might avert his predicted overthrow.

l. 19. **Minerva** (Athene): a daughter of Jove who sprang from his brain, full-grown and full-armed; variously the goddess of storm and the thunderbolt, of war, and of wisdom.

ll. 21-23. **Of all the gods,** etc. The quotation is from Æschylus' *Eumenides.*

PAGE 182, l. 1. **Aurora:** goddess of dawn.

l. 2. **Tithonus:** son of Laomedon, king of Troy. In the feebleness of old age, he was turned into a grasshopper by Aurora. Tennyson's "Tithonus" voices his lament.

l. 3. **Achilles:** The hero of Homer's *Iliad* was the son of Peleus and of the Nereid Thetis. His mother, Thetis, endeavored to make him invulnerable by dipping him in the river Styx. The heel by which she held him remained unwashed, and here he received his mortal wound.

l. 5. **Siegfried:** hero of the old German epic, *Nibelungenlied.* He bathed in the blood of a dragon that he might be rendered immortal. Immediately an invulnerable horny hide grew upon him, save in a spot between his shoulders on which a leaf had fallen, keeping off the dragon's blood. Into this spot the lance of his enemy Hagen was plunged.

l. 19. **Nemesis:** a Greek goddess of retribution, the personification of moral reverence for law, and hence for conscience.

l. 20. **Furies.** See note on "Gifts," page 5, line 7.

ll. 26, 27. **Ajax,** a Greek, **Hector,** a Trojan: heroes of the Trojan war. After a personal combat they exchanged arms, with the result related in the essay.

PAGE 183, l. 1. **Thasians:** inhabitants of the island Thasos in the Ægean Sea.

l. 2. **Theagenes:** a Thasian renowned for his great strength and swiftness. See Pausanias' *Description of Greece,* Book VI., Chapter XI.

l. 16. **Phidias** (B.C. 500?–432?): a celebrated Greek sculptor.

l. 18. **Hellenic:** Grecian. So called from Hellen, the mythical ancestor of all the Greeks.

l. 24. **interfering volitions:** the "active invention" mentioned above, or originality.

l. 25. **Dante Alighieri** (1265-1321): the greatest Italian poet, the author of *The Divine Comedy.*

PAGE 187, l. 16. **Edmund Burke** (1729-1797): an il-

lustrious Irish statesman, orator, and author. His most widely read works are his *Speech on Conciliation with the American Colonies* and *Reflections on the French Revolution.*

l. 25. **obscene:** ill-omened.

PAGE 189, l. 1. **the emerald of Polycrates.** Polycrates, tyrant of Samos from about B.C. 536 to 522, had formed an alliance with Amasis, king of Egypt, who, however, finally renounced it through fear that the amazing good fortune of Polycrates would incur the envy of the gods. At the solicitation of Amasis, Polycrates, in order to inflict some injury upon himself, threw a ring of extraordinary beauty, one of his most valued possessions, into the sea. But in a few days it was found in the belly of a fish which had been presented to him. Soon after, Polycrates suffered an ignominious death on the cross.

l. 8. **to pay scot and lot:** borough taxes levied according to the ability of the person taxed; hence, to pay one's share. "Scot implies a contribution toward some object to which others contributed equally; lot, the privilege and liability thereby incurred."—*Century Dictionary.*

PAGE 193, l. 7. **the royal armies sent against Napoleon:** The reference is to Napoleon's escape from Elba, where he had been banished. Upon his return to France, the armies of the king sent out to capture him went over to his standard.

l. 12. **Winds blow and waters roll.** The quotation is from Wordsworth's sonnet, "Inland, within a hollow vale I stood."

l. 18. **the stag in the fable:** one of the best-known fables of Æsop.

PAGE 198, l. 12. **conquered from Chaos and Nothing.** Compare this idea of virtuous action conquering spiritual chaos with Milton's conception of the creation of the physical world, *Paradise Lost,* Book VII., 204-242. For the mythological conception of chaos, see Gayley's *Classic Myths,* pages 37-38.

PAGE 199, l. 15. **St. Bernard:** a celebrated French ecclesiastic of the twelfth century.

PAGE 200, l. 24. **as the shell-fish crawls,** etc. Read O. W. Holmes's "Chambered Nautilus."

QUESTIONS

1-2. What was Emerson's motive in writing this essay? The incident merely brought his pen to paper.

5. Had the author confidence in humanity?

7. The idea of polarity is a favorite one of his. Notice it elsewhere in these essays.

11. What would he name as the best manly attribute? Do you agree with him? Are the thoughts of the paragraphs discouraging to proper ambition?

12. "The true life," etc., to end of paragraph. Does government, then, have no control over personal happiness? Is a despotism as good as a democracy? Read Goldsmith's "The Traveller."

17. Do we sever the pleasure of the senses from the needs of the character? Might the course of a life be determined by this distinction?

18. Is this a true account of human life?

19-20. Why cannot one take the sweet and leave the bitter?

21. "Nothing can be given," etc. Compare Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfal," Prelude to Part I., stanza 4.

23. Would this view eliminate from history the hero?

28. If one believes this deeply, will his conduct be influenced by the belief?

30. Does fear spring from a sense of wrongdoing?

32. Is it wise to borrow and lend freely?

33. True of small financial matters? Are men not to acquire property?

34. Why do swindlers continue in their course, if this is true?

35. Can any one prevent just compensation? Does labor receive its full reward?

36. In Webster's speech in the White murder case, the saying "murder will out" is discussed. Compare the passage with this one.

37. Would this idea of return be a noble motive for one's own conduct?

38. Is one the better for his faults?

39. Which is to be preferred, a life of effort or a life of ease?

40. Do wage earners act upon this principle? Should they?

41. Does history prove the law of compensation?

44. Can a criminal escape retribution?

45-46. Must we always suffer loss for gain?

48. Does calamity indicate growth?

50. Would the teachings in this paragraph tend to lighten the burdens of life's calamities?

POLITICS

PAGE 203, l. 19. **Pisistratus** (B.C. 605-527): tyrant of Athens. He usurped supreme power, was twice expelled, was finally restored to office and permitted to rule Athens until his death. **Cromwell, Oliver** (1599-1658): Cromwell was the leader of the Puritan movement in England. This movement overthrew Charles I. and made Cromwell Lord Protector of England, Ireland, and Scotland.

l. 20. **Plato** (B.C. 429-347): Greek philosopher. See note on "Self-Reliance," page 103, line 124.

PAGE 205, l. 7. **bill of rights:** An English statute called the Bill of Rights was enacted at the accession of William and Mary to the throne. It declared that taxes and armies must be raised, not by the monarch, but by act of Parliament; that the right to petition, and many others now conceded by all enlightened governments, belong to each citizen. The phrase as used in the United States designates that part of the Federal and of the State constitutions which secures these same rights, and liberty, to the people.

PAGE 206, l. 5. **Laban:** a Syrian, father-in-law of the patriarch Jacob.

l. 7. **Midianites:** an Arabian tribe who settled in the

Syro-Arabian desert, harassed the Israelites in the time of the Judges, but were finally defeated by Gideon.

PAGE 209, l. 20. **Saracens.** Mediæval writers used the word to designate the Mohammedans of Syria and Palestine, the Arabs generally, or the Arab-Berber races of northern Africa. The reference in the essay is to those Saracens who, in A.D. 711-732, crossed from northern Africa into Spain, which they conquered, penetrated France and eastward until checked and defeated by Charles Martel and his German warriors at Poitiers. **Swiss.** The Swiss have been heroic defenders of their national independence.

PAGE 216, l. 8. **Botany Bay.** In 1770 Captain Cook discovered a bay in New South Wales, Australia. Joseph Banks, a botanist who had joined the expedition, gave the bay its name from the number of new plants which he discovered there. In 1787 the English government established there a colony for convicts, but moved it afterward to Port Jackson. The name of Botany Bay was retained till 1840, when the colony was abandoned.

l. 21. **Ames, Fisher** (1758-1808): American orator and statesman. He wrote the *Laocoön* and other essays to arouse opposition to France.

PAGE 217, l. 10. **Lynch-law.** The term is said to have originated in Virginia. A planter by the name of Charles Lynch (1736-1796) formed an agreement with two other men to keep the peace in their community by whipping and banishment without due process of law.

PAGE 219, l. 25. **quixotic:** extravagant; absurdly romantic, like Don Quixote, the half-crazed knight described by the Spanish writer, Cervantes.

PAGE 221, ll. 16, 17. **myrrh, frankincense:** These were fragrant gums or exudations much valued and used for incense in religious worship.

l. 24. **Malthus, Thomas Robert** (1766-1834): English political economist. He is noted for his *Essay on Population.*

l. 25. **Ricardo, David** (1772-1823): English political economist. He is noted for his discussion of the theory

of rent. **the Annual Register:** This publication was begun by Robert Dodsley, an English poet and bookseller, in 1758. It has been continued by others down to the present time. A volume is issued each year, giving an account of the leading events of current history. The first article in the first volume is an account of the war in America—the French and Indian War.

l. 26. **Conversations' Lexicon:** a German cyclopædia. It was being published about the time of the writing of the essay on *Politics*.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain how Pisistratus and Cromwell on the one hand, and Plato and Paul on the other, illustrate the thought of the author.

2-7. Is voting based, in any instance of which you know, upon personal as distinct from property rights?

8. How does each nation here named illustrate the thought of the writer?

9. Does property write its own statutes?

10. Is democracy better than other forms of government?

11. Are political parties always corrupt? How do parties become corrupt? What is a party of circumstance? Should we vote for the principles of the party or excellence of character in the candidate?

12-13. Is the author a pessimist or an optimist in political matters?

14. What is the chief blunder of governments?

15. What is the meaning in "The appearance of character makes the state unnecessary"?

16. Why has society not reached its meridian?

Explain "Each seems to say, 'I am not all here.' "

17. What tendency does the author see in regard to government?

What is the basis of government by force?

19. Can society be maintained without force? Has the idea been advocated or the plan tried?

SHAKSPEARE; OR, THE POET

PAGE 229, l. 16. **The Puritans:** a class of Protestants in the sixteenth century who demanded the banishment of all forms that bore any resemblance to the Roman Catholic Church. In the reign of Charles I. (1625-1649) they became a political power in England, but lost ascendency with Cromwell's death.

l. 18. **Anglican Church:** the Established Church of England.

l. 28. **Punch:** a satirical, illustrated weekly journal, published in London. It was founded in 1841.

PAGE 230, l. 11. For this group of dramatists see page 358, the table on *The Development of the English Drama.*

l. 18. **At the time when he left Stratford:** probably 1585 or 1586.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENGLISH DRAMA

BEGINNINGS

I. Religious Drama.
   a. Miracle or Mystery Plays. (Middle Ages to 17th century.)
   b. Moralities. (15th and 16th centuries.)

II. Transitional.
   a. Interludes.
   1. John Heywood. (——1565.)

FIRST STAGE OF REGULAR DRAMA

I. First Comedy.

   a. Nicholas Udall.
   1. Ralph Royster Doyster. (1540?)

II. First Tragedy.

   a. Sackville and Norton.
   1. Gorboduc, or Ferrex and Porrex. (1562.)

III. Historical Plays.[1]
- *a.* Bale's Kynge Johan.
- *b.* Troublesome Reign of King John. (Before 1591.)
- *c.* Richard III. (Before 1579.)
- *d.* Contention betwixt the Houses of York and Lancaster.
- *e.* Henry Fifth. (Before 1588.)

SHAKSPEARE'S PREDECESSORS

I. John Lyly. (Euphuistic Court Comedy.)
- *a.* Endimion.

II. George Peele. (1558-1597.)
- *a.* Edward I.
- *b.* The Old Wives' Tale. (Used by Milton in *Comus*.)

III. Robert Greene. (1560-1592.)
- *a.* Orlando Furioso.
- *b.* Pandosto. (Used in *Winter's Tale*.)

IV. Thomas Kyd. (——1594.)
- *a.* The Spanish Tragedy.

V. Thomas Lodge. (——1625.)
- *a.* Rosalynde. (Used in *As You Like It*.)

VI. Christopher Marlowe. (1564-1593.)
- *a.* Tamburlaine.
- *b.* Jew of Malta. (Used in *Merchant of Venice*.)
- *c.* Edward II. (Used in *Richard II*.)
- *d.* Doctor Faustus.

THIRD PERIOD

I. William Shakspeare. (1564-1616.)
- *a.* Comedies.
- *b.* Tragedies.
- *c.* Historical Plays.

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[1] All used by Shakspeare.

II. Ben Jonson. (1573?-1637.)
a. Every Man in his Humor.
b. Every Man out of his Humor.
c. The Alchemist.

DECLINE OF THE DRAMA

I. Francis Beaumont (1586-1616.) and John Fletcher. (1579-1625.)
a. Philaster.
b. The Maid's Tragedy.
c. Bonduca.
d. The Mad Lover.
e. The Triumph of Honor. (Sophocles.)

II. George Chapman. (1559-1634.)

III. Thomas Dekker. (1575?-1640.)

IV. Thomas Middleton. (1570?-1667.)

V. John Webster. (About 1580-1638.)

VI. Thomas Heywood. (About 1580-1650.)

VII. Philip Massinger. (1583-1638.)

VIII. John Ford. (1586-1639.)

l. 21. **Tale of Troy.** Episodes of the Trojan War, the theme of the *Iliad* and the *Æneid,* were favorite subjects for the early writers.

l. 24. **Plutarch** (46?–120?): a Greek historian. His famous work consists of forty-six *Parallel Lives* of Greek and Roman celebrities. Although criticised for inaccuracy and prejudice, they remain one of the most valued works of Greek literature. Shakspeare frequently drew on *Plutarch's Lives* for his material.

l. 26. **Brut:** the legendary history of Britain in verse by Layamon, written in the thirteenth century. The hero is the legendary Brutus, great-grandson of Æneas and king of Britain. **Arthur:** a British chieftain of the sixth

century. Around his name has grown up the great cycle of romances of King Arthur and the Round Table. See Pyle's *Legends of King Arthur* or Bulfinch's *Age of Chivalry*. Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* are based on these legends.

l. 27. **the royal Henries:** Among the historical plays of Shakspeare are the histories of Henry IV, V, VI, and VIII.

PAGE 231, l. 9. **copyright.** In the absence of any law of copyright, publishers often defied the wishes of the owners of manuscripts. The playhouse authorities deprecated the publishing of plays because they believed it hurtful to the theater receipts, but for a little compensation the actors willingly gave the copy of their parts of a play into the hands of a publisher, sometimes reciting it from memory. In this way mutilated copies were published. The playwright must record his play in the Stationer's Register, but this simply proved that it had passed the censorship which the king had set over plays, and did not protect his rights.

PAGE 232, l. 28. **Malone** (1741-1812): an Irish literary critic and scholar. He left material for a revised edition of Shakspeare's works, which was finished by Boswell, and is among the most valuable editions of Shakspeare.

PAGE 233, l. 13. **Wolsey's soliloquy.** Wolsey (1471-1530) was a distinguished cardinal and statesman, prime minister of England under Henry VIII. See Shakspeare's *Henry VIII*, III. ii. 208, 227.

l. 14. **scene with Cromwell.** See *Henry VIII*, III. ii. 371 ff.

l. 23. **account of the coronation.** *Henry VIII*, iv, i.

l. 24. **the compliment to Queen Elizabeth.** *Henry VIII*, V. v. 16-55.

PAGE 234, l. 20. **Homer.** The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and certain hymns to the gods are assigned by very ancient tradition to the authorship of Homer. But modern criticism has cast doubt upon this authorship, believing them to be of a composite character, the product of various authors and ages. The derivation of the poet's name is interesting in this connection,—'Ομηρος, one who puts together.

l. 21. **Chaucer, Geoffrey** (1340?–1400): sometimes called "The Father of English Poetry." His most celebrated work is *The Canterbury Tales,* material for which, like much of his other work, is very freely borrowed. **Saadi** (1190–1291?): a Persian poet. Among his best-known works are collections of odes—*Gulistan* (Rose Garden), *Buston* (Tree Garden), and *Pandaman, or Book of Counsel. Gulistan* is the most finished, and is a moral work in verse and prose, consisting of eight chapters on kings, contentment, love, youth, old age, duties to society, etc. Emerson has borrowed from Saadi. Like Osman, he uses the term to express the ideal, not the actual, self.

ll. 26, 27. **Presenting Thebes,** etc. From Milton's "Il Penseroso," lines 99–100. These lines suggest the favorite subjects of Greek tragedy, viz. the house of Œdipus in Thebes, the descendants of Pelops Agamemnon and his family, and the various heroes of the Trojan War.

PAGE 235, l. 1. **Pope, Alexander** (1688-1744): the central figure of the eighteenth-century English poets. **Dryden, John** (1631–1700): poet and prose writer. Called "The Father of English Prose," because of his efforts to simplify and popularize prose.

l. 7. **Lydgate, John** (1370-1451). His metrical version, *The Troy Book,* was probably written too late for Chaucer's use. The dates would seem to indicate that the relation suggested by Emerson could not have existed. **Caxton, William** (1422-1491). His *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* was written in 1471. Chaucer undoubtedly drew from the fictitious Dares, mentioned in the next line, or from Guido da Colonna. This is an illustration of Emerson's inaccuracy.

l. 8. **Guido da Colonna:** a Sicilian poet and historian of the thirteenth century.

l. 10. **Dares Phrygius.** A Latin translation of the sixth century of our era claims for its original an account of the Trojan War by Dares of Phrygia, whom tradition reports a participator in the war. **Ovid, Publius Ovidius Naso** (43 B.C.-17 A.D.?) one of the leading Roman poets of the Augustan age. His *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides* are based on classical legends. **Statius, Publius Papinius**

(45-96 A.D.): a Roman poet, the author of *Thebais and Achilleis.*

PAGE 235, l. 11. **Petrarch** (1304-1374): one of the greatest of Italian poets. In the *Monkes Tale,* line 335, Chaucer says, "Let him unto my master Petrark go." The influence of these Italian poets was chiefly a spiritual one. **Boccaccio, Giovanni** (1313-1375): Italian novelist and poet. Many have believed that his *Decameron,* a collection of one hundred stories, suggested to Chaucer the plan of his *Canterbury Tales,* but later criticism seems to doubt that Chaucer was familiar with the book. It is certain, however, that Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato* was the source of Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressida* and his Teseide of the *Knight's Tale.*

l. 12. **Provençal poets:** poets of the south of France. See note on Troubadours, under "American Scholar," page 287, line 10.

l. 14. **William of Lorris** (died about 1240 or 1260): a french crouvère, author of the first part of the *Roman de la Rose.* **John of Meung** (1250-1305): a poet who is best known by his completion of Lorris' *Roman de la Rose.*

l. 15. **Troilus and Creseide:** a tale of the Trojan War which Shakspeare used later in his *Troilus and Cressida;* a second use of it is made in the burlesque in *A Midsummer's Night's Dream.*

l. 16. **Lollius of Urbino:** an unknown author, to whom Chaucer claims indebtedness. **The Cock and the Fox.** The reference is to Chaucer's "Nonne Preestes Tale."

l. 17. ***Lais* of Marie.** Marie de France, a French poet of the twelfth century. **House of Fame:** an unfinished poem showing how the great names of literature such as Dante and Boccaccio survive despite the progress of time.

l. 18. **Gower, John** (1325-1408). This English poet's chief work is the *Confessio Amantis.*

PAGE 236, l. 14. **Sir Robert Peel** (1788-1850): an eminent statesman, member of Parliament, and Prime Minister of England.

l. 15. **Webster, Daniel** (1782-1852): American states-

man and orator. **Locke, John** (1632-1704): an English philosopher. His principal works are the great *Essay on the Human Understanding* and the *Treatise on Government*. **Rousseau, Jean Jacques** (1712–1778): a renowned Swiss-French philosopher.

l. 17. **Menu, or Manu:** the law books of the Manavans, formerly regarded as the work of one writer, but now viewed as a compilation.

l. 24. **Delphi:** the seat of the oracle of Apollo, the most renowned oracle of antiquity.

PAGE 237, l. 14. **Liturgy:** an appointed form for the service used in the Christian church.

l. 20. **Grotius, Hugo** (1583-1645): a Dutch jurist and theologian.

PAGE 238, l. 9. **Vedas:** the name of the sacred book of the Brahmins, supposed to contain the foundation and sum of all knowledge.

l. 10. **Æsop:** a Greek fabulist of the sixth century B.C. Tradition represents him as a dwarf and originally a slave. **Pilpay, or Bidpai:** title of fables of an Arabic translation of a Sanskrit original. La Fontaine acknowledges his indebtedness to these fables. **Arabian Nights:** a very ancient collection of Oriental tales. **Cid, Romances of the.** Written by an unknown author about A.D. 1200.

l. 11. **Iliad.** See note on Homer in this essay, page 234, line 20. **Robin Hood:** a traditionary English outlaw of about 1100. See Pyle's *Robin Hood and His Merry Men.* **Scottish Minstrelsy:** early poetry or songs of the minstrels.

l. 24. **Shakspeare Society:** founded in 1841 by Collin, Halliwell, and their friends. They published some forty-eight volumes before the society was dissolved in 1853. The New Shakspere Society was founded in 1874.

l. 26. **Mysteries.** See preceding table on *Development of English Drama.*

ll. 29, 30. **Ferrex and Porrex, Gammer Gurton's Needle.** See table on *Development of English Drama.*

PAGE 239, l. 17. **Queen Elizabeth:** Queen of England

from 1558-1603. Her reign is called "The Golden Age of English Literature."

l. 18. **King James:** James VI. of Scotland and James I. of England. His reign covered the years 1603-1625.

ll. 18–19. **Essexes, Leicesters, Burleighs, and Buckinghams:** names of English noblemen renowned in the time of Elizabeth and James. For further information see Green's *Short History of England*. Scott's *Kenilworth* gives a vivid picture of life in Elizabeth's reign and introduces some of these men.

PAGE 240, l. 2. **Bacon, Francis** (1561-1626): an English statesman, philosopher, and writer. His best-known works are *The Advancement of Learning* and his *Essays*.

l. 4. **Ben Jonson.** See *Table on Development of English Drama.*

l. 6. **words of regard and panegyric.** Jonson admired and loved Shakspeare, though he complains that he "wanted art" because he broke the dramatic unities. Of his fellow-dramatist he writes: "He was indeed honest and of an open and free nature; had an excellent fancy, brave notions, and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with that facility that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped. . . . His wit was in his own power; would the rule of it had been so too. But he redeemed his vices with his virtues. There was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned."

l. 17. **Theodore Beza** (1519-1605): a noted theologian of France.

l. 18. **Isaac Casaubon** (1559-1614): a classical scholar and theologian of French origin. **Sir Philip Sidney** (1554-1586): an English author and general. His *Sonnets, Arcadia,* and *Defence of Poesy* are his most important contributions to literature.

l. 19. **Sir Walter Raleigh** (1552-1618): an English courtier, officer, colonizer, historian, and poet.

l. 20. **Sir Henry Vane** (1612-1662): an English Puritan statesman. **Isaac Walton** (1593-1683): an English author whose fame rests on *The Compleat Angler*. **Donne, John** (1573-1631): English poet and divine.

l. 21. **Cowley, Abraham** (1618-1667): an English poet of high rank during his lifetime, but his fame was extraordinarily brief. **Bellarmine, Roberto** (1542-1621): a noted Italian cardinal.

l. 22. **Charles Cotton** (1630-1687): an English poet, best known for his translation of Montaigne's essays. **John Pym** (1584-1643): an English statesman. **John Hales** (1584-1656): an English scholar and divine. **Kepler, Johann** (1571-1630): a celebrated German astronomer, one of the founders of modern astronomy.

l. 23. **Vieta, Francis** (1540-1603): a French mathematician of note. **Albericus Gentilis** (1551-1611): Italian jurist. He founded international law. **Paul Sarpi** (1552-1623): a Venetian historian.

l. 24. **Arminius:** Latinized form of Harmensen (1560-1609). A Dutch theologian, leader of the Arminian movement in theology.

l. 27. **Spenser, Edmund** (1552-1599): an English poet whose chief work was *The Faerie Queene.*

ll. 27, 28. **Beaumont** and **Massinger.** See *Table on Development of English Drama.* **two Herberts:** Edward Herbert (1582-1648), an English philosopher, soldier, diplomat, and historian. His brother, George Herbert (1593–1633), was a poet.

ll. 28, 29. **Marlow, Chapman.** See *Table on Development of English Drama.*

PAGE 241, l. 1. **Pericles** (B.C. 495-429): an Athenian statesman and author. The Age of Pericles is proverbial as a period of extraordinary artistic and literary splendor. The "constellation of great men" includes Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Pindar, Herodotus, Socrates, Plato, and Phidias.

l. 12. **Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim** (1729-1781): a German dramatist and critic of first rank. In 1759 he proclaimed Shakspeare superior to all ancient or modern poets.

l. 13. **Wieland and Schlegel:** Christopher Martin Wieland (1733-1813) in 1762 began a prose translation of Shakspeare, which was completed by Eschenburg in

1784. Between 1797 and 1833 there appeared at intervals the classical German rendering by August Wilhelm von Schlegel and Ludwig Tieck.

l. 17. **Hamlet**: the hero of the Shakspearian play of that name. Hamlet was essentially a philosopher rather than a man of action.

l. 23. **Coleridge, Samuel Taylor** (1722-1834): one of the English "Lake Poets." See Coleridge's *Lectures and Notes on Shakspeare*. **Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von** (1749-1832): the greatest name in German literature, and one of the greatest poets the world has ever known. His masterpiece is *Faust*. For his criticisms of Shakspeare, see *Wilhelm Meister*.

PAGE 242, l. 9. **Blackfriars' Theatre.** For a description of the theater of Shakspeare's time, see George Brandes's *William Shakespeare; A Critical Study*, Volume I., Chapter XV.

l. 17. **Macbeth.** Written 1605-1606.

PAGE 245, l. 16. **Warburton, Bishop** (1698-1779). In 1747 Bishop Warburton produced a revised version of Pope's edition of Shakspeare. **Dyce, Alexander** (1798-1869). Published an edition of Shakspeare's plays in 1857.

l. 17. **Collier, John Payne** (1789–1883). Edited Shakspeare's plays in 1842-1844. Some of the works relating to the biography of Shakspeare by this author contain forged documents which have greatly perplexed succeeding biographers.

l. 18. **Covent Garden, Drury Lane,** etc. See note on Blackfriars'.

l. 20. **Betterton, Garrick,** etc. Famous actors of Shakspearian parts: Thomas Betterton (1635-1710); David Garrick (1717-1779); John Philip Kemble (1757-1823); Edmund Kean (1787-1833); William Charles Macready (1793-1873).

PAGE 246, ll. 3-5. **"What may this mean,"** etc. *Hamlet*, I. iv. 52 ff.

l. 17. **The forest of Arden.** The scene of *As You Like It*.

l. 18. **the nimble air of Scone Castle.** It was of Macbeth's castle at Inverness, not of Scone Castle, that

Shakspeare made King Duncan say: "the air nimbly and sweetly recommends itself." *Macbeth,* I. vi. 1-2. **Portia's villa.** See *Merchant of Venice,* Act. V., i.

l. 19. **"the antres vast,"** etc. *Othello,* I. iii. 140.

l. 25. **the Cyclopean architecture of Egypt and India:** Cyclopean architecture is a term applied to an early form of masonry, which was a gigantic construction of stones either unhewn, or more or less irregularly shaped, and fitted together. It was remarkable for the immense size of the stones used, and, because of its vastness, was supposed to be the work of the Cyclopes. The solidity and majesty attending the colossal size of the architecture of Egypt and India gave rise to the comparison.

l. 26. **Phidian sculpture.** Phidias was a Greek sculptor. **Gothic minsters:** cathedrals of the Gothic or pointed type of architecture.

PAGE 247, l. 21. **Aubrey, John.** He recorded the poet's first biography in his gossiping *Lives of Eminent Men,* which was compiled between 1669 and 1696. **Rowe, Nicholas** (1673-1718), published a more lengthy biography than had yet been written, in the form of a memoir prefixed to his edition of Shakspeare's plays, which appeared in 1709.

PAGE 248, l. 17. **Timon.** See note under "gifts," page 9, line 19. **Warwick.** See the plays entitled *Henry IV, V,* and *VI.*

l. 18. **Antonio.** See the play entitled *The Merchant of Venice.*

l. 28. **Talma, François Joseph:** a celebrated French tragedian who received special favor from Napoleon.

PAGE 250, l. 21. **Plato:** an Athenian philosopher, born about 429 B.C. Immortality was the subject of chief interest to this philosopher.

PAGE 252, l. 20. **Daguerre:** inventor, 1839, of the daguerreotype, a picture formed on a metallic plate by the chemical action of light.

PAGE 254, l. 13. **Epicurus** (B.C. 342-270): the founder of the Epicurean school of philosophy, which teaches that

pleasure is the only possible end of rational action and that the ultimate pleasure is freedom.

PAGE 256, l. 5. **Koran:** the sacred book of the Mohammedans.

ll. 12, 13. ***Twelfth Night,*** etc.: These three plays are comedies, and thus present the lighter side of life. Emerson has chosen this group to answer the preceding question.

l. 16. **The Egyptian verdict of the Shakspeare Societies.** As the reading of the essay has shown, Emerson sets very little value on the result of the arduous researches of the Shakspeare societies. "Egyptian" is used to signify one of a class of wandering impostors who disguise themselves as gypsies and live by telling fortunes, etc. It is Emerson's way of pronouncing the result of this society's work worthless.

l. 23. **Tasso, Torquato** (1544-1599): an Italian poet of distinction. **Cervantes, Saavedra Miguel de** (1547-1616): Spanish poet and novelist, author of the widely read *Don Quixote.*

l. 28. **Chaos.** See note on Chaos in "Compensation," page 198, line 12.

PAGE 257, l. 21. **Swedenborg, Emanuel** (1688-1772): Swedish philosopher and theosophist.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand by originality in a literary production? What is plagiarism?

2. On what ground does a man of great achievement merit the gratitude of others?

3. Can government prevent intellectual progress? Was the Shakspearian drama a benefit or an injury to the English? Has it now outlived its usefulness?

4. From what sources did Shakspeare draw his literary materials?

5. What set limits and gave balance to his dramas?

6. What element in Shakspeare's writings is original? Was he a plagiarist?

7. Do many writers of today borrow from literature with the same freedom as the early writers did?

8. Must there not have been a first great writer in each field of literature, whose writings were completely original?

9. How has the best literature of the world been produced?

10. What is Emerson's estimate of the work done by the Shakspeare societies?

11. How do you account for the obscurity of the man Shakspeare?

12. Account for the slow recognition of his greatness.

15-16. Can we account for genius?

17. By what means may we know an author whose biography is obscure?

18. What is the highest purpose in studying Shakspeare's works? Emerson's?

19-21. What in Shakspeare places him above all other writers?

22-23. Which is of first importance in a composition, the thought or the manner of expression?

24. What distinguishing quality of Shakspeare's poetry is here noted?

25. Is cheerfulness as important in life as it is in poetry?

26. What question is here raised?

27. What use did Shakspeare make, or fail to make, of nature? What of his mental power? Does he touch human life?

28. What have others done with the same environment of nature?

29. What is Emerson's conclusion concerning the highest achievements of great literary men? What yet remains unattained?

NATURE

PAGE 259, l. 5. **At the gates of the forest.** Emerson was a lover of wooded places. He bought a tract of woodland adjacent to Walden Pond, near Concord, for his pleasure and meditation. See his poem "Woodnotes."

PAGE 261, l. 11. **Gabriel, Uriel:** names of two of the seven archangels.

ll. 28–30. **My house,** etc. In Concord. Emerson's home the greater part of the last fifty years of his life.

PAGE 262, l. 1. **our little river:** the Concord River.

l. 10. **villeggiatura:** Italian for the season of pleasure spent in the country.

PAGE 263, l. 17. **Versailles:** the famous royal residence of Louis XIII. of France and his successors. **Paphos:** famous as the site of the temple of Venus in the island of Cyprus. **Ctesiphon:** The royal palace of Khussan I. of Persia was situated here.

PAGE 264, l. 1. **Æolian harp,** or lyre: A stringed instrument caused to sound by the sweeping of the air over the strings.

l. 3. **Dorian:** pertaining to Doris, one of the four great ethnic divisions of Greece. **Apollo:** a Greek god and later a Roman divinity, god of the sun, music, healing, etc. See Gayley's *Classic Myths*. **Diana:** moon goddess and divine huntress. See Gayley's *Classic Myths*.

l. 23. **genii:** plural of *genius,* the ruling spirit of a place, person, or thing.

l. 27. **Tempe:** an extraordinarily beautiful valley in eastern Thessaly.

PAGE 265, l. 9. **Campagna:** the plain surrounding Rome.

PAGE 266, l. 10. **"Wreaths" and "Flora's chaplets."** This is presumably an allusion to Mrs. F. S. Osgood's poems. In 1839 her first volume, *A Wreath of Wild Flowers from New England,* had been published in London. In 1841 she published *The Poetry of Flowers and Flowers of Poetry.* In 1847, the year in which Emerson's *Second Series of Essays* appeared, of which "Nature" is one, *The Floral Offering* was published. The quality of her nature-poetry would hardly please Mr. Emerson.

l. 15. **Pan:** a Greek god of woods and fields, of flocks and shepherds.

ll. 23-24. **Nature . . . selfishly studied.** For personal ends, rather than the self-sacrificing search for truth for its own sake.

PAGE 268, l. 6. **Proteus:** the "old man of the sea," who possessed the prophetic gift and the power of changing his shape at will. He tended the flocks (seals) of Neptune.

l. 20. **Mosaic:** the conception of the world found in *Genesis*. **Ptolemaic:** Ptolemy, an Alexandrian, in the second century set forth a system of geography and astronomy which was accepted until the Copernican system was established in the sixteenth century.

l. 27. **opened the door for,** etc.: By the slow processes of nature the earth is made ready for vegetation and animal life. **Flora:** the goddess of flowers.

l. 28. **Fauna,** or Bona Dea: a Roman goddess of the earth. She represented the fruitfulness of nature. **Ceres:** the goddess of harvest. **Pomona:** the goddess of fruit trees, gardens, and vegetables.

PAGE 274, l. 11. **Franklin, Benjamin** (1706-1790). Recall the story of Franklin's experiments with lightning, as an illustration of this truth. **Dalton, John** (1766-1844). This most valuable scientific work was on the atomic theory. **Davy, Sir Humphry** (1778-1829): the inventor of the safety lamp. **Black, Joseph** (1728-1799): His discoveries relative to carbonic acid gas and latent power of heat made him famous.

PAGE 276, l. 22. **stoics:** a sect of Roman philosophers who scorned the pleasures of the senses.

PAGE 277, l. 30. **Behmen, Jacob** (1575-1624): a German mystic.

PAGE 278, l. 1. **Fox, George** (1624-1691): the founder of the Society of Quakers.

l. 3. **Naylor, James** (1618-1660): a fanatic of Puritan persuasion; later, a Quaker.

PAGE 283, l. 21. **Œdipus:** a king of Thebes who answered the riddle of the Sphinx. See Smith's *Classical Dictionary*.

QUESTIONS

1. Observe the impressionistic force of this paragraph. What is the attitude of the author's mind toward outward nature? Does he seem to enjoy one season more than the others? Compare with this the Prelude to Part I. of Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfal."

2. What affinity has he in mind? Read Wordsworth's

"The Daffodils," and notice the affinity between the poet and the daffodils.

What is meant by "the sublime moral of autumn and of noon"?

In what sense are we "parasites of nature"?

3. How many of these observations have you made? To which of the author's senses does nature appeal here? What influence of nature does he point out?

4. Can you find beauty in every landscape?

5. Is nature a difficult subject for conversation? Why? What is the thought in the sentence, "If there were good men, there would never be this rapture in nature"?

8. Does the statement, "nature is always consistent," contradict his position on consistency in the essay on "Self-Reliance"?

9-10. What is the cause, or the condition of this identity, which he finds in all things?

11. Do you discover this exaggeration in nature? Can you give instances?

12. Do people frequently overvalue their own possessions and powers? Is this unfortunate?

13. What is meant by the statement, "We live in a system of approximations"? How does the strife for wealth fool the pursuer?

14. Do you experience this disappointment in nature?

15. When nature mocks us, should we resent the mockery?

16. How may we escape from the discouraging sense of our helplessness in the courses of nature? How may one cultivate his love of nature?

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

PAGE 287, l. 7. **games of strength.** The ancient Greeks had four national games or contests. These were the Olympian, Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian. The contests were both athletic and intellectual. The effects of these great national gatherings were far reaching and important to the prosperity of Greek civilization. Through them the

spirit of union among the numerous Greek states was fostered, and physical and intellectual training and culture were directly and effectively encouraged.

l. 10. **Troubadours.** During the latter half of the eleventh century, wandering poets or minstrels frequented the courts of southern France. To these William of Poitiers gave encouragement. The result was a large body of songs in the Provençal dialect. In the year 1137 Eleanor of Guienne, granddaughter of William, became the wife of Louis VII. of France. She was a brilliant woman, and introduced the poetry of the court singers of the south, the troubadours, into her more northern court. From this period, about the middle of the twelfth century, troubadour or court lyrical poetry in the French language arose through the influence of the Provençal songs.

PAGE 288, l. 9. **pole star:** The star Vega will become, so astronomers tell us, the pole star.

PAGE 290, l. 15. **"All things have two handles. . . ."** The saying is from the Greek philosopher, Epictetus, probably not an "old oracle."

PAGE 292, l. 28. **"Know thyself."** The origin of this "ancient precept," which was inscribed on the Delphic oracle, is not known. It has been ascribed to Plato and to many others, even reaching back of the Homeric times. Juvenal says it came from heaven (*Satire* XI., line 27). See Pope's couplet, *Essay on Man,* Epistle II., lines 1-2.

PAGE 294, l. 28. **Cicero, Marcus Tullius** (B.C. 106-43): a great Roman orator. **John Locke** (1632-1704): a noted English philosopher. His best-known work is the *Essay on the Human Understanding.*

l. 29. **Francis Bacon** (1561-1626): English statesman and philosopher. His writings now most widely known are his *Essays.*

PAGE 295, l. 6. **Third Estate:** During the period in which national assemblies were being developed in the European nations, a system of "estates" took form and received recognition. The three estates in several nations were those of the nobles, the clergy, and the commons. That of the commons was the "Third Estate."

l. 7. **restorers of readings,** etc.: People who devote themselves to restoring texts to their original form by comparing late with early editions.

PAGE 296, l. 21. **Shakspearized.** Emerson coined this word.

PAGE 297, l. 13. **Chaucer, Geoffrey** (1340?-1400): he is called "The Father of English Poetry." His great work is *The Canterbury Tales.* **Andrew Marvell** (1620-1678): an English satirist. When Milton was Latin secretary under the Commonwealth, Marvell was his assistant. He was patriotic and a strong opponent to the abuses and corruption practiced by Charles II. and his court. **John Dryden** (1631-1700): distinguished English poet. Dryden, and after him Pope, are the two most distinguished poets of the classical, or Queen Anne, period of English literature.

PAGE 298, l. 13. **"He . . . Indies.** An old Spanish proverb.

PAGE 300, l. 21. **I dissipate its fear:** The meaning is that I shall, in a measure, comprehend the laws of the universe, which is beyond our ready understanding, and I shall view the universe without fear.

PAGE 301, l. 7. **mulberry leaf . . . satin:** We convert our experiences into thought as the silkworm feeds upon the mulberry leaf and converts it into silk.

l. 23. **incorruption.** See 1 *Corinthians* xv. 53.

PAGE 302, l. 4. **empyrean.** See note on "Friendship," 55:29.

l. 18. **Savoyards:** people living in Savoy, Switzerland. They were noted for wood-carving until they exhausted their forests.

PAGE 306, l. 25. **Druids:** Little is known of the Druids, except that they were the priests of the ancient Celts of Gaul, Britain, and Ireland. Circular inclosures of stones still mark their places of worship in England. It is believed that they made human sacrifices to the gods. **Berserkers:** In Scandinavian mythology the Berserker was a champion warrior who fought without clothing, and had the power to put himself into a state of martial frenzy. **Alfred the**

Great (849-901): King of the West Saxons. He repelled invaders, established government, encouraged learning, and translated Latin books into the English of his day. English historians owe much to Alfred for records and chronicles of the ninth century.

PAGE 307, l. 14. **Flamsteed, John** (1646-1719): English astronomer who established the positions and made a catalogue of nearly three thousand stars.

l. 15. **Herschel, William** (1738-1822). It may be doubted whether any astronomer has done more to advance our knowledge of the heavens than this English astronomer. He won great fame by the discovery of the planet Uranus.

PAGE 309, l. 11. **ancient and honorable**. See *Isaiah* ix. 15.

PAGE 312, l. 2. **Wherever Macdonald sits.** This seems to be an erroneous reference. He probably has in mind the following story in Cervantes' *Don Quixote:* A gentleman, having a farmer as his guest at dinner, requested him to take his place at the head of table. Out of politeness, the farmer objected; whereat the gentleman lost his temper and exclaimed, "Sit thee down, clodpole; for let me sit wherever I will, that will still be the upper end and the place of worship to thee." **Linnæus, Carolus** (1707-1778): a Swedish botanist who systematized the science of botany.

l. 5. **Davy, Sir Humphry** (1778-1829): He is recognized as the foremost English chemist. **Cuvier, Baron George** (1769-1832): French philosopher, scientist, and statesman.

PAGE 315, l. 5. **Classic and Romantic:** By the classic age is meant that period which includes the activity of Greece and Rome; by the romantic age is meant the Middle Ages.

l. 18. **second thoughts:** afterthoughts; doubts; questionings; or possibly the state of mind which never admits of a full acceptance of a truth, lest it should prove untrue.

l. 23. **Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.**

From Hamlet's soliloquy, Shakspeare's *Hamlet*, Act III., Scene 1.

PAGE 316, l. 19. **the same movement.** The allusion is to the influence of the French Revolution.

PAGE 317, l. 8. **Provençal minstrelsy.** See note on Troubadours, page 287, l. 10 of this essay.

l. 22. **eternal law:** the meaning is, grant to common objects divine attributes, and by so doing, classify and dignify them.

PAGE 318, l. 1. **Goldsmith, Oliver** (1728–1774): Irish writer. His best-known works are *The Vicar of Wakefield*, "The Deserted Village," and "The Traveller." **Burns, Robert** (1759-1796): the most celebrated of Scottish poets. His "Cotter's Saturday Night" and many of his briefer songs have seldom been surpassed for simplicity and lyrical beauty. **Cowper, William** (1731-1880): distinguished English poet. Besides a number of satires, he wrote *The Task*, many well-known hymns, and translated Homer.

l. 2. **Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von.** See note under "Shakspeare," page 241, line 23. **Wordsworth, William** (1770-1850): the most distinguished poet of England during the nineteenth century. To quote from Matthew Arnold: "As Wordsworth's poetry is, in my judgment, the most important work done in verse in our language during the present century, so Emerson's *Essays* are, I think, the most important work done in prose."—*Essay on Emerson.* **Carlyle, Thomas** (1795-1881): a Scotchman by birth, he became one of the first writers of Great Britain. His reputation is based chiefly upon his essays and historical writings. Emerson visited him in 1833. A lifelong correspondence and a warm friendship were the results. Carlyle was much given to speculative philosophy, a fact which helped on the literary relations of the two men.

l. 3. **Pope, Alexander** (1688-1744): English poet and satirist. He was the great master and perfecter of the heroic couplet in the Queen Anne period of English literature. The *Essay on Man, Essay on Criticism,* and *The Rape of the Lock* are his best-known works. **Johnson, Samuel** (1709-1784): noted English conversationalist and writer. He was the author of a most remarkable *Dic-*

tionary of the English Language. He also wrote *Lives of the Poets*.

l. 4. **Gibbon, Edward** (1737-1794): perhaps the ablest of English historians. His great work is *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

l. 19. **Swedenborg, Emanuel** (1688-1772): Swedish founder of a religious sect or school of Christian philosophy. He was a theologian and mathematician.

PAGE 319, l. 14. **Pestalozzi, Johann Heinrich** (1746-1827): a noted Swiss educational reformer.

PAGE 320, l. 25. **shades**: a belief formerly prevailed that the soul might be seen but not touched after its separation from the body. This appearance, somewhat indistinct, resembled a shadow, or shade. Hence the meaning of shade as denoting the spirit after death.

QUESTIONS

1. Would similar games influence us as they did the Greeks? What influence had minstrelsy in Europe? Why did it cease? Does the statement about meetings for the advancement of science still hold true?

2. Does the history of American literature since 1837, the date of this address, prove that our day of literary independence was then dawning?

3-5. Is specialized labor an evil? Is the tendency increasing or decreasing?

6-7. What is the place and office of the scholar?

8-9. What, is, or should be, the influence of nature upon the scholar?

10-20. What should be the influence of the past, or the past expressed in books, upon the scholar? What are the dangers from that influence?

21-26. In what way is action essential to the scholar?

27. What is the real value of action?

30-35. What does Emerson mean by self-trust? How does self-trust embrace all of the scholar's duties? In what other essay does Emerson emphasize self-trust?

36-42. What are the chief points of application of what he has been saying? What does he censure in present

conditions? Has he hope for a better day in American letters?

43. Beginning with "Young men of the fairest promise," etc., read and consider well to the end of the paragraph. The inspiration contained is well worth possessing for one's self.

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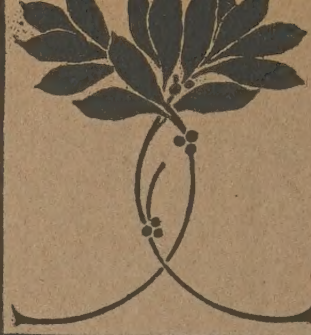
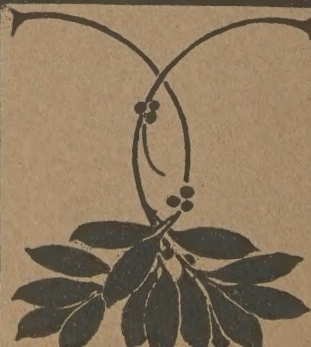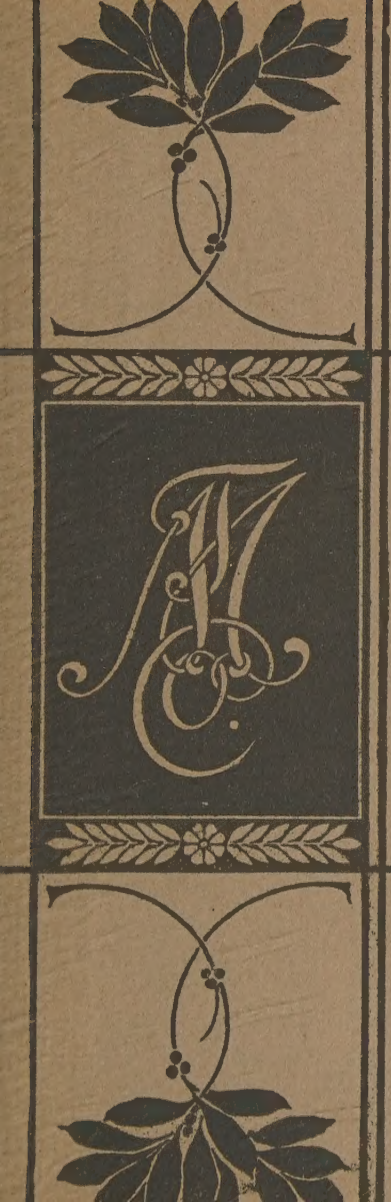
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